DELIA,

A

PATHETIC

AND

INTERESTING

TALE.

Virtue when diſtreſs'd, can ſmile on Death,
And as a friend embrace it.

——————Yes, thou ſhalt find
Women, when armed with Virtue, know no fear
But gilt and ſhame.

IN FOUR VOLUMES

VOL. II.

LONDON,
Printed for WILLIAM LANE, Leadenhall Street,
1790.

BRITISH MUSEUM

DELIA.

LETTER XXXIV.

Delia Bloomfield to *Mrs. Bloomfield.*

I THANK you, my dear Madam, for your kind attention to my health—though it was never leſs neceſſary than at preſent. Indeed the only allay I have to my ſatisfaction is Lady Willmore's illneſs, which entirely confines Henrietta, who never leaves the houſe, and ſeldom her mother's chamber, except when ſhe ſleeps. If you were now to ſee Lady Willmore, pity would diſarm the reſentment which the re-

membrance of her paſt conduct ſo naturally excites. She ſeems perfectly ſenſible of her errors, and if her life is ſpared, I am confident ſhe will employ it to better purpoſe than ſhe has hitherto done. We informed her of Henrietta's engagement to Wentworth, and as ſhe has totally relinquiſhed all hopes of an alliance with the Duke, ſhe expreſſed great ſatisfaction at her proſpect of an union with a man whoſe character is ſo juſtly and univerſally eſteemed.

Our greateſt difficulty, at preſent, is to come to an explanation with the Duke. His conduct, I think, is rather ſingular. Though he conſtantly ſees Henrietta alone, he never addreſſes her but on general ſubjects. It appears to me, that dubious of ſucceſs, he fears to hazard an eclairciſſement which would put a period to his flattering hopes, and probably even deprive him of the pleaſure he evidently enjoys in ſeeing and converſing with her.

Our ball at the Rotunda was very delightful. Lady N—— and Lady Charlotte were there, and the Duke and Lord Hermont.

Hermont. I danced with his Grace in the courſe of the evening. Henrietta was the moſt inſenſible girl in the world. Had his vows been addreſſed to me, with what tranſport ſhould I have received them! I could not help fancying that Lord Cheſterfield was riſen from the ſhades to gallant me. He has put me quite out of conceit with youth.—In him its moſt captivating allurements, health, ſpirit, animation, are united with the excellencies peculiar to maturer years—and he recalls to our imagination thoſe luxuriant plants, the produce of happier climates, whoſe branches bear the bluſhing bloſſoms of the ſpring entwined amidſt the golden fruits of autumn. Lord Hermont too was rather particular in his attentions—I have a great fancy I have made a conqueſt—Lady Charlotte was evidently piqued—indeed my conſcience whiſpers me it will be a meritorious act to deliver him from the ſnares of this little Circe—and Wentworth, who firſt inſpired me with the deſign, encourages me to perſevere in it with all his

might and main. I muſt be cautious, however, leſt in endeavouring to diſengage him, I entangle myſelf, which would be ſtretching my generoſity rather too far.

Perhaps, my dear Aunt, Lady Willmore's ſentiments in reſpect to riches coincided with yours. Perhaps the conduct we blindly attributed to diſſipation and vanity, was the conſequence of reflection—the reſult of philoſophy. Conſcious, perhaps of the diſorders and diſquietudes produced by wealth, and the duties and anxieties annexed to the poſſeſſion of it, ſhe ſagaciouſly determined to ſecure the peace and virtue of her child by exempting her from a temptation, ſo often of fatal conſequence to both. It is charitable at leaſt to derive the actions of our fellow-creatures from the moſt favourable ſource.

To-night we go to the Play — the next night to a Concert—the night after to two or three routes—and the night after.—But I ſhall terrify you with my diſſipation.—Yet were I not ſometimes to leave the ſhelter of your protecting wings, my dear

and

and reſpected friends! I ſhould be unconſcious of half the bleſſings I enjoy—but when I contraſt you with the unthinking giddy race, my preſent aſſociates, your worth receives additional luſtre from the compariſon; and the voice of reaſon authorizes the unbounded partiality of my filial love. Intimate but a wiſh for my return, and whatever may be my engagements, I ſhall break them without reluctance, and inſtantly obey the welcome and reſpected mandate.

Lord Archer, I think, looks very ill, and has loſt more than half his vivacity. I tell him I am convinced he is in love, and want him to make me his confidant. He poſitively denies the charge, however, I am determined to watch him narrowly, and perhaps may diſcover his enchantreſs. He flirts ſometimes with Lady Charlotte, but I believe his heart is quite unconcerned in his gallantry to her ladyſhip. Indeed, my dear Aunt, I ſtrongly ſuſpect that you are yourſelf the fatal occaſion of the alteration I obſerve, for he ſpeaks in raptures

of returning to Bloomfield, and expreſſes the utmoſt impatience to leave Dublin. Now, do tell me, have you never perceived in his manners any indications of *la belle paſſion*—nor obſerved in his eyes any ſymptoms of tenderneſs?

I thank you for your attention to my favourites—and have executed the commiſſion you favoured me with. Wentworth ſtill frames excuſes for remaining in town. I dare ſay I ſhall return to you without him. Lord Archer, however, will joyfully accompany me. Jenny tells me my friſeur waits.

Adieu, my dear Madam,

Yours ever,

DELIA BLOOMFIELD.

LET-

LETTER XXXV.

Mrs. Sophia Bloomfield to *Delia Bloomfield.*

MY DEAR CHILD,

I AM much obliged to you for the ſpeed and attention with which you have executed my commiſſions. The things never could come in better time, for farmer Stughs has been very bad with his ſore leg, and Joan Dobbs has almoſt cut her finger off; beſides, Nanny Doyle's young child is dying of the gripes; ſo that you may think I have been ſadly hampered ſince you left us.

I am exceedingly ſorry to hear Lord Archer is not well. He is a worthy young man, and deſervedly the favourite of every one here. As I do not underſtand French (for you know my father would not have even let me learn to write if he could have helped it) I do not know what you mean by *la belle paſſion*. I aſked the Dean, who

happened to be with me when I got your letter—but he flew into ſuch a rage when I read that part of it to him, that you would have thought he was going out of his wits. But as for Lord Archer's eyes, ſo far from obſerving any ſymptoms of tenderneſs in them, I proteſt I always thought them remarkably ſtrong. However, I ſhould think a little conſerve of roſes might be ſerviceable to them, and will ſend by the bearer a pot of my own making with directions for uſe. How I can have occaſioned his malady I am ſure I cannot conceive, unleſs you impute it to my putting him to ſleep in the tapeſtry chamber.

You do indeed terrify me with an account of the life you lead; but in this, as well as in every other reſpect, you are your own miſtreſs,—for you know, my dear Delia, we ſhould not enjoy your company if we thought you could be more happy elſewhere. But to do you juſtice, you hardly ſeem to have a will of your own—and appear to be always beſt pleaſed when you can make us moſt happy.

I am

I am glad to hear Lady Willmore ſeems inclined to amendment. Lord knows, there was a great room for reformation! Yet if ſhe was to recover to-morrow, and had another eſtate to ſquander, I doubt if ſhe would be a jot more ſaving or thrifty. There is an old proverb that ſays, "the "fox will die in his ſkin,"—"and what's "bred in the bone will never come out of "the marrow." I am ſure Henrietta was a wonderful girl.

I want to know ſomething about this Lord Hermont—but you have ſuch a ſtrange volatile way of writing, that there is no ſuch thing as telling whether you are in jeſt or earneſt. After all, my dear, though no ſingle woman can be in happier circumſtances than I—yet what ſignifies mincing the matter, the marriage ſtate is the moſt proper and elligible; particularly for you, who have no near relations. Only think what a deſolate poor creature I ſhould be, were it not that I had my brother's houſe to live in, and you to be as a child to me. For what ſignifies money, if we

have no one to love. It may procure us a parcel of flattering ſycophants to dangle at our heels, but a true friend is not to be purchaſed. Indeed, my dear, your diſapprobation of the marriage ſtate gives us all a great deal of uneaſineſs. I am ſure we can never leave the world with any ſatisfaction, whilſt we know you to be in ſuch a lonely and uncomfortable ſituation. I wiſh therefore you would make up your mind on the matter, and ſince you think that Lord Hermont ſo pleaſing and agreeable, and that he admires you ſo much, why can't you endeavour to like him?—if you do not chuſe to make any long ſtay in town, ſurely you may invite him down here.

Lady Mordaunt is come to Wood Park. We had a viſit from her yeſterday. I never could abide that woman! It looks ſo prepoſterous to ſee a perſon, at her time of life, with her poor grey hairs all frizzled and frenched out, and a little ſort of fly cap ſtuck on the top. I proteſt her whole head-dreſs looks as if you could blow it away

away with your breath. Lord knows, a good plain pinner and coif would become her lean jaws a thouſand times better, and give her a more reſponſible air, than the rouge ſhe bedawbs her cheek bones with. I never ſaw ſuch an abominable figure in my days. Then ſhe keeps ſuch a fuſs with my Lady this—and my Lord t'other—and the Earl and the Counteſs and the Duke and the Ducheſs—and maſquerades and operas—and the ſtupidity of the country. Lord defend me! I am ſure my poor ſiſter and I could not edge in a word all the time ſhe ſtayed—but ſat like a couple of mopes. Sir Humphry is as hippiſh as ever, and the phyſicians have ordered him to the country—but were you to hear her woeful lamentations on the occaſion, you would be apt to imagine ſhe had received ſentence of tranſportation. A great puniſhment truly, to be obliged to leave the dirty ſmoke of Dublin to go to ſuch a beautiful place at ſuch a fine ſeaſon! I wonder whether theſe fine ladies ever intend to die, or do they

expect to have routes and maſquerades in the other world.

I am called to one of my patients. Farewell, my dear, take care of yourſelf, and return when it is agreeable to you, and not till then.

You do not tell me how Jenny goes on. I beg you won't give her too much encouragement—for ſhe is rather too pert already, and does nothing but ridicule poor Martha, becauſe forſooth ſhe is a decayed gentlewoman and an old maid, as ſhe tells me. Let her look to herſelf and ſee if ever ſhe will come to ſo much good.—Your favourites are all well. I am in haſte,

Your affectionate Aunt,

S. BLOOMFIELD.

LET-

LETTER XXXVI.

Lord Archer to *Lord Revell.*

I HAD ſome thoughts of returning laſt week to Bloomfield, but was prevented by Delia's unexpected arrival in town. I have always obſerved, that, for ſome reaſon which I cannot penetrate, my mother ever appears averſe from her leaving Bloomfield, and was not in reality pleaſed with her viſit, though ſhe received her with her accuſtomed tenderneſs. Mr. Bloomfield loves his amiable daughter as fondly as his unbounded affection for Lady Harriot will permit him—and my mother's attachment to her is yet more ardent. Why then do they voluntarily deprive themſelves of the pleaſure they apparently receive from her ſociety? It is true, her father's ſecond marriage has mutually diminiſhed their affection—and ſlackened the ties of filial and

paternal

paternal love, and his decided preference of Lady Harriot, though it excites not Delia's envy, has impaired her tenderneſs. Her tenderneſs, like a ſtream obſtructed in its courſe, flows back to thoſe more dear, though more diſtant relations, who have been the friends and guardians of her youth. On them her warm and ſuſceptible heart laviſhes its affections with a fond prodigality; and from thoſe amiable effuſions of love and gratitude, they ſeem to derive new ſpirit to their declining exiſtence.

Delia has been much in company ſince her arrival, and has been greatly admired. The young Earl Hermont ſeems really captivated. I doubt not but ſome time hence I may ſee my ſiſter a Counteſs. He is a nobleman of unexceptionable character and agreeable manners,—and yet with ſuch an underſtanding—with ſuch animation as Delia poſſeſſes—a benevolence ſo attractive—a ſweetneſs ſo irreſiſtible—I know no one who deſerves her.

I envy Delia the amuſement ſhe receives from ſcenes of gaiety, to me inſipid and fa-

tiguing

tiguing to the laſt degree. I am weary—very weary of my preſent courſe of life.—I am impatient to return to Bloomfield—yet happineſs is not local. If we find it not in our own boſoms, ſhall we hope to attain it by diverſifying our ſituation? There is, however, ſome amuſement in the purſuit of it, and a change of place by furniſhing us with new ideas, may mitigate the chagrin which it cannot totally expel.

My reſidence in Ireland will be of no long continuance. Idleneſs is the parent of diſcontent, it nouriſhes in our boſoms the viper that deſtroys our peace—and the enervation it produces diſqualifies us for reſiſtance. From a life of action we may derive ſtrength and vigour to our powers, which may enable us to drive the enemy from his ſtrong holds—I am determined on the experiment, and mean to purchaſe a commiſſion in the ſervice of the Eaſt-India Company.

If I were attentive only to lucrative views, perhaps I could not hit on an expedient

pedient better calculated to repair my ſhattered fortunes—but theſe have loſt their influence—and even the unhealthineſs of the climate is of little conſequence to a man whoſe life is to him of no eſtimation. America ſhould be the theatre of my martial exploits, did I not feel an unconquerable averſion from turning my arms againſt the breaſts of my countrymen and friends, for alienated as they are, I ſtill conſider them in that light.

Next ſummer I ſhall bid adieu to Europe. An eternal adieu my heart forebodes it will be! If then, you ſtill retain an affection for the friend of your youth—if you wiſh to behold him once more—return to your native country before he abandons it for ever.—The idea affects me.

I can write no more.

ARCHER.

LET-

LETTER XXXVII.

From the Same.

I HAVE been extremely ill ſince I laſt wrote. A ſevere cold, accompanied by a fever, has confined me to my apartment. Lady Harriot ſcarce ever left me, and Delia was often her companion. She divided her time between me and Henrietta, who is confined at home by her mother's illneſs. There is a variety in Delia's character which renders it extremely intereſting. Her ſuperior underſtanding is often eclipſed by her exceſſive vivacity, which, though no enemy to the *reality*, is undoubtedly no friend to the *appearance* of wiſdom. A ſtranger perceives nothing peculiar in the turn of her mind, and is only attracted by the unaſſuming modeſty—and artleſs gaiety of her manners. Naturally fond of ridicule and addicted to ſatire—though ſhe never

never indulges, she is sometimes led away by a propensity, which, when accompanied by talents, is so liable to render the possessor at once feared and detested. But the dart derives its power of wounding from the force with which it is launched, and her shafts are cast about with an air so sportive and undesigning, that instead of feeling ourselves hurt by their poignancy, we laugh at the playfulness with which they are thrown: and it is by degrees and with surprize we discover the acute and penetrating observer lurking beneath the mask of the volatile girl. This turn for ridicule, which generally renders women so very unamiable, is so well corrected in Delia by sweetness of temper and sensibility to the feelings of others—that it heightens the beauty of her character by giving it an animation, which effectually secures it from ever sinking into that insipidity, which sometimes prevails in minds where the softer virtues wholly predominate. Her gentle and affectionate heart glows with friendship, and melts with sympathy. Her melancholy

melancholy becomes more affecting, when we contraſt it with her native vivacity—and it excites our wonder, that a mind which has never experienced affliction, ſhould feel ſo ſenſibly for the misfortunes of others. She affects no particular elevation of ſentiment, or ſublimity of idea. In company, ſhe is herſelf the perſon to whom ſhe pays the leaſt attention—and is more ſolicitous to derive entertainment from the talents of others, than to attract admiration by the diſplay of her own. Many women are more beautiful—ſome are perhaps more faultleſs—but I doubt if the world contains another more amiable or more beloved.

Lord Hermont and Wentworth often viſited me in my illneſs.—To the former, it is true, I cannot feel myſelf much indebted for his aſſiduity—his motives, I believe, were ſelfiſh. Yes, his paſſion for Delia is evident—I think ſhe muſt perceive it;—women are ſeldom ſlow at diſcoveries of this nature; but I ſuppoſe ſhe approves it. May he be worthy her affection! I am ſtrongly intereſted in her fate, and wiſh

for

for nothing more ardently than her happineſs. Indeed, her attention to me during my late indiſpoſition has greatly endeared her to me. She broke every engagement, nor could ſhe be prevailed on even to leave the houſe, except when ſhe went to Lady Willmore's. I thought Lord Hermont looked jealous and diſpleaſed yeſterday, when ſhe declined going to the play on account of Lady Harriot's confinement, and my indiſpoſition. Why ſhould he envy me her friendſhip!—it is all I ever hope to poſſeſs.—I am interrupted.

Bloomfield.

You are ſurprized to ſee my letter dated from Bloomfield. Surely Tranquility is the inhabitant of this venerable manſion—once more I feel my breaſt pervaded by her ſoothing power, and hail her benignant influence.

On the evening I began this letter, which I was obliged to break off abruptly, on being ſummoned to attend the ladies at tea, I found Lady Harriot and Delia alone.

Lady

Lady Harriot was obliged to receive a visit from an old lady, and left Delia and me to a *tête-à-tête*, which on my side was by no means brilliant. She indeed chatted with her usual ease and vivacity. She even sung for me; but the affecting melody of her voice nourished the melancholy it was designed to expel. Finding her efforts to amuse me ineffectual, she seemed at length infected with my gloom. She grew thoughtful, and I heard her sigh.

"Why does my Delia sigh?" said I, taking her hand.

"From sympathy, I believe," replied she, smiling; "your gaiety has often contributed to mine, and it is but just that I should share your melancholy." "If I could avoid it," returned I, "you should not. In my pleasures, if I possessed them, my sweet friend should participate, but to my sorrows she should ever be a stranger."

"On such terms," replied she, "I disclaim the title of your friend. Friendship is an union of souls and utterly precludes

" precludes diſſimulation; and if I were
" too unfeeling to find a pleaſure in weep-
" ing with the afflicted, I ſhould be un-
" worthy the privilege of rejoicing with
" the happy. The pleaſures of friendſhip
" are not peculiar to ſcenes of chearful-
" neſs. Its ſweeteſt ſoothings, on the
" contrary, are reſerved for the hour of
" diſtreſs—then, in the abſence of every
" other conſolation, it ſoftens the aſperity
" of misfortune, and renders even an-
" guiſh delightful!"

The affection ſhe deſcribed ſeemed to ani-
mate her features as ſhe ſpoke. She re-
garded me with that expreſſion of tender-
neſs with which I have often beheld her
contemplate her beloved Henrietta.—I was
unſpeakably affected, and could not an-
ſwer her.

" Tell me then, my brother, my friend,"
reſumed ſhe, " are my conjectures well
" grounded? Does ſome ſecret uneaſineſs
" prey upon your mind? Or does it ſigh
" for the amuſements you have been obliged
" to relinquiſh, and repine at the inactivity

of

" of your preſent ſituation. Indeed I
" have often pitied you at Bloomfield; the
" ſtillneſs of the country muſt have been
" depreſſive to you, who have been accuſ-
" tomed to ſpend your time in a manner
" ſo different."

" Far the reverſe," replied I, " the hap-
" pieſt hours I have long known were
" thoſe I paſſed at Bloomfield. Far from
" regretting the pleaſures of the gay me-
" tropolis, which, too long I acknowledge,
" had captivated my ſenſes, I would not
" if I might return to them. My illneſs
" has occaſioned a depreſſion of my ſpirits,
" but I doubt not I ſhall ſhake it off en-
" tirely when I return to Bloomfield."

" Let us go then," ſaid ſhe, with vi-
vacity. " What detains us? For my part,
" I am weary of amuſements which have
" little beſides novelty to recommend
" them; and I anticipate the ſatisfaction
" our friends will receive from a ſurprize
" ſo agreeable. How Aunt Sophy will
" be delighted! Let us ſet off to-morrow.
" I can bid Henrietta adieu in the morn-

" ing.

" ing. I can now leave her without re-
" gret—Wentworth will console her."

" No, my dear Delia," said I, charmed with her sweetness and the warmth of her friendship, " I cannot consent to deprive
" Mr. Bloomfield and Lady Harriot of
" your society. Let me return alone to
" the country."

" Pardon me," replied she, " you are
" already too great a favourite there—and
" if I were absent, might entirely supersede
" me. I see your malicious intentions, but
" am determined to frustrate them. But
" can you really determine to leave Lady
" Charlotte?"

" And can you resolve to abandon Lord
" Hermont?"

" Oh there's an infinite difference. If
" I have made any impression on his lord-
" ship's heart—it is to be presumed he will
" explore me in my desart; but this is
" condescension you cannot reasonably ex-
" pect from Lady Charlotte.

Lady Harriot entered.

" W

"We are going to leave you, Madam" ſaid Delia.

"On what account?—what has occa-
"ſioned a reſolution ſo ſudden?"

"Poor Lord Archer," replied ſhe, "no
"longer able to endure the fiery darts
"launched by the little God from Lady
"Charlotte's eyes, finds himſelf neceſſita-
"ted to fly for refuge to the ſhady groves
"of Bloomfield.—And I feel a ſtrong in-
"clination to prove by abſence the paſſion
"of Lord Hermont. If it burns in his
"boſom with the fervour I imagine, dif-
"ficulties will encreaſe its ardour. Per-
"haps it may produce me an adventure.
"Not a ſilver-bearded pilgrim or unknown
"peaſant ſhall I meet without fancying I
"behold my hero in diſguiſe!"

She ran on in this whimſical ſtrain until interrupted by the entrance of Lord Hermont and Wentworth.

"O Wentworth," cried ſhe, "I am
"rejoiced to ſee you—have you any diſ-
"patches for the Dean?—Lord Archer
"and I leave town to-morrow."

"To-morrow!" repeated Lord Hermont with a ſurprized and mortified air.

"Yes, to-morrow morning.—I aſſure "you we have the moſt cogent reaſons to "precipitate our departure, but I cannot "with ſtrict propriety divulge them."

"O Madam," ſaid Lord Hermont, who was evidently piqued and jealous, "I ſhall "never endeavour to know more of your "ſentiments than you wiſh to reveal."

"Well," ſaid Wentworth, "ſince you "are determined to go, it is very proba-"ble we ſhall viſit you in your ſolitude. I "have been for ſome time meditating an "excurſion to Firdale, and Lord Her-"mont has promiſed to accompany me."

Delia, at this inſinuation, caſt an arch ſignificant glance at me,—and ſaid it would give her great ſatisfaction to ſee them at Bloomfield.

Wentworth, I can eaſily perceive is in the intereſt of his friend, but Delia's ſentiments I cannot penetrate. The exceſſive eaſe of her manners to Lord Hermont, and the readineſs with which ſhe propoſed to leave

leave town, ſeem to beſpeak indifference. But the moſt refined diſſimulation hides itſelf beneath the veil of ſincerity—and the motive which ſhe alledged in jeſt might in reality have influenced her conduct. But what am I ſaying? Is it Delia—the artleſs and affectionate Delia, to whoſe friendſhip I owe ſo many obligations—that my ungrateful pen accuſes of diſſimulation and inſincerity. I retract the charges, which on any other occaſion it were treaſon againſt honour and gratitude to have exhibited; but in affairs of love, diſſimulation is authorized, and deceit is another name for delicacy.

The next day we ſet off at noon in Mr. Bloomfield's poſt-coach, with Delia's waiting woman. The reviving freſhneſs of the air as we aſcended the mountains—the enchanting landſcapes around us, cloathed in the ſweet verdure of this delightful ſeaſon, the ſublime and majeſtic proſpects which the opening hills preſented to our view—every object conſpired with the vivacity of my companion, to diſpel the

gloom that had oppreſſed my mind—and inſpire it with a ſweet ſerenity—that calm, yet rapturous ſenſation which Milton expreſſes, by " vernal delight and joy."

A new ſcene of pleaſure awaited us on our arrival. How beautiful are the effuſions of filial and parental tenderneſs! We gaze with tranſport on the divine exertions of a Raphael's genius—and ſhall we turn with indifference from thoſe animated forms—the creation of a celeſtial hand—the moſt glorious monuments of the wiſdom of their original. When I beheld the venerable family claſp my lovely friend to their aged boſoms, and raiſe their eyes in ſilent gratitude to the power who had bleſſed them with ſuch a child! Ah, my friend, what regret, mingled with the admiration with which I beheld them!—Doomed never to experience ſenſations the moſt pure and delightful—if heaven ſhould prolong my days—the endearing names of parent and of child will be unknown to me.—No blooming boy will ſupport my feeble ſteps, no lovely girl will fondly fold me in her

filial

filial embrace.—Ah, my friend, in our reſearches after happineſs, how widely have we deviated from her reſidence.

ARCHER.

LETTER XXXVIII.

The Anſwer.

I MUST confeſs that you have excelled even yourſelf, and in your laſt epiſtle contrived to arrive at a ſupremacy of abſurdity, which, great as I acknowledge your attainments in this reſpect to be, I till now thought impoſſible.

What! after reading the heap of inconſiſtencies you have thrown together for my amuſement, would you perſuade me you are not in love! Grant me but this, and my indignation is at an end. I can bear

with, and even compaſſionate weakneſſes and follies which are the legitimate offſpring of the fantaſtic deity. Flowing from this ſource your abſurdities may be natural and excuſeable; deduce them from any other, and they become ridiculous — diſguſting—unmanly. What then is the alternative? Either confeſs yourſelf in love, or permit us to deſpiſe you.

And why not confeſs a paſſion ſo pure and ſo reſpectable? Are you aſhamed that your heart is not totally hardened by licentiouſneſs? That it ſtill retains the genuine impreſſions of nature which impel the uncorrupted mind to form a virtuous attachment, and receive whilſt it communicates felicity?

The object of your tenderneſs is diſengaged; no obſtacles impede your happineſs, but thoſe which a romantic delicacy may throw in your way. If your fortune were equal to Delia's, you would not heſitate what courſe to purſue—but now *wiſely* determine to relinquiſh her, becauſe you cannot confer on her thoſe riches which

ſhe

ſhe does not want, and on which moſt probably ſhe would ſet no value. Trace this motive to its ſource, and you muſt derive it either from an opinion of unworthineſs in her, or a deſpicable vanity in yourſelf. Gifted as ſhe already is by fortune, can you ſuppoſe her ſo mercenary as to be ſtill rapacious of wealth? And are you ſo proudly mean as to bluſh at receiving from the woman who gives you her heart, who reſigns you her liberty, that affluence which the liberal mind conſiders as a poor addition to ſacrifices ſo much more eſtimable? Let me hear no more, then, of the Indies; not at leaſt until after you have made the offer of your hand to Delia: if ſhe is ſuch as you have repreſented her, ſhe will receive it with candour, or decline it with generoſity.

Nothing but jealouſy could incline you to diſtruſt her of partiality to your rival: indeed the preference ſhe gave you, was too decided to be miſconſtrued. The playful archneſs you deſcribe in her manners, is the offſpring of an unembarraſſed mind.

Love, aukward and timid, betrays itſelf, and though it may ſanctify many concealments, can never authoriſe a woman of delicacy to act inconſiſtently with the modeſty of her nature. A hackneyed coquette may diſguiſe her feelings (if ſhe has any) under the maſk of an affected gaiety, but a ſuſceptible young girl is inadequate to ſuch a deceit; and that arch glance which Delia darted at you on the intimation of her lover's intended viſit to her, was more expreſſive of indifference, than a thouſand proteſtations. — Senſibility would have averted her eyes and fluſhed her cheeks with bluſhes.

In the concluſion of your letter, what a ſtrange combination do you preſent!—The ſublime and pathetic ſo involved and entwiſted in the abſurd and nonſenſical, that it is utterly out of my power to ſeparate them. Pray, what oracle have you conſulted in your travels? Who has politely informed you, that you are doomed to a ſtate of celibacy? You wiſh to experience the ſweet interchange of the filial and paternal

ternal affections; but, like the waggoner who invoked Hercules, reſolve to take no trouble about the matter. If we could realize the ſyſtem of the little philoſophers who maintain, that children vegetate in the parſley bed, you might ſupply yourſelf without any great expence of time or pains; and, in truth, from the puerility of your ideas of late, I ſhould not be much ſurprized to hear you had adopted it.

There was a time, indeed, when, if a hero was engaged in the ſervice of his country, Jupiter, Neptune, or ſome other propitious deity was ſo obliging as to reward his valour, by providing him an heir during his abſence; and the good man received the gift with gratitude, and cheriſhed it with affection: but in theſe degenerate days of ours, a child thus miraculouſly ſent, is by no means deemed an acceptable preſent; nor would it excite, even in your boſom, all ſuſceptible as it is, any emotions but thoſe of ſcorn and averſion.

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I admire your miſtreſs, becauſe ſhe is not one of thoſe formal pieces of ſtill life, who affect a faultleſs excellence of character. I deteſt uniformity! The line of beauty never was a ſtraight one. If it was my fate to be connected with one of thoſe automatons, who move by rule, and fancy virtue to conſiſt in the extinction of the paſſions, I ſhould ſhut her up in a glaſs-caſe, or ſet her up in a niche to ornament my country ſeat! And I candidly confeſs, I would rather be united to a woman, who might ſometimes by her tongue convince me of the prerogative of a wife, than to have one whoſe oppoſite conduct, would be a continual, though *tacit* reproach to my own irregular ſallies.

REVELL.

LET-

LETTER XXXIX.

Delia Bloomfield to *Henrietta Willmore.*

WELL, how do you go on? Do you begin to tire of your tender *tête-à-tête* yet —or feel an inclination to nod or yawn in the preſence of your ſwain? If you had any policy you would ſend Wentworth to us for a fortnight; for if you once ſuffer the ſubtle eſſence of the paſſion to evaporate, and permit it to degenerate into a mere ſentimental attachment, it becomes a more powerful opiate than Hoffman's Anodyne, or Decoction of Poppies; which very naturally accounts for the phenomenon of Prince Prettyman's ſomniferous propenſity on the unexpected arrival of his miſtreſs.

I have been cruelly diſappointed! Seven times has Sol performed his diurnal *tour*, ſince my departure from the metropolis,

and no Lord Hermont appears upon the ſcene!—Alas! I fear he is a recreant knight. Are my nets then of ſo ſlight a texture, that the only captive I could flatter myſelf I had entangled in them, has already broke the ſnare? Sometimes I fly to my glaſs, fully perſuaded that ſome fell wight of an enchanter, has deformed this phyſiognomy of mine—but it ſtill reflects the ſame image.

Though perhaps the transformation may be viſible to every eye but my own—for I have read of ſtrange deceptions performed by the magic ſkill of a certain little ſpright ycleped vanity.

"Of power to cheat the eye with blear illuſions,
"And give it ſmall preſentments."

Her potent arts ſuſpend the ravages of time—ſmooth the furrows of age—and bid the roſes of ſpring embloom the pallid cheeks of winter!

Surely no human being ever more powerfully experienced the tyrannic ſway of this frightful imp than poor Lady Mordaunt.

daunt. Though near ſeventy winters have ſhed their ſnows on her ladyſhip's pate, I challenge the world to produce me a little ſilly head of ſixteen, ſo crammed and ſtuffed with the follies of the times; or a tongue that expatiates more glibly on dreſs, faſhions and polite amuſements. She ſpent this evening with us, and whilſt wrapped in ſilent amazement, I liſtened to her unceaſing converſation—I ſcarce knew whether to laugh at the abſurdity of her conduct, or indulge thoſe impreſſions of melancholy, which ſuch an object is calculated to excite. When I contraſt her with my grandmother, whoſe "grey hairs are "a crown of glory to her head"—I can ſcarcely perſuade myſelf they are creatures of the ſame ſpecies. How lovely and venerable is age, when, with ſteady ſtep, it purſues the way of wiſdom!—how deſpicable and diſguſting, when found wandering in the paths of folly!

Lady Mordaunt has received no ſmall acceſſion to her ſelf-conſequence, by Sir Humphry's having been appointed guardian

dian to two young ladies, daughters to the Earl of L——, lately deceaſed. She expects a viſit from her wards, and hopes to prevail on them to reſide with her.—"For "you know," ſaid ſhe, "as my houſe "is the rendezvous of all the people of "faſhion, it will be impoſſible for young "ladies of their high rank to find a more "eligible ſituation. I wiſh, Delia Bloomfield, I could prevail on you to ſpend a "few weeks with me at my town houſe.— "I am ſure you would be quite the *ton* "—and you know no one can introduce "you into life with the ſame advantages "that I can. You live in the ſtrangeſt manner for a young lady of your expectations; I wonder how you can reconcile "yourſelf to ſuch a waſte of time!"

"A waſte of time," cried the Dean, who never contemplates her ladyſhip without a peculiar auſterity of aſpect, "I am "of opinion, that her time is employed to "the beſt poſſible advantage, whilſt it is "ſpent in laudable endeavours to contribute to the eaſe, the convenience and

"the

" the felicity of thoſe to whom ſhe is
" doubly incited to conſecrate it—by the
" inſtinct of nature, and by the principles
" of rationality."

" Come, come, Dean Sedly—you are
" not in the pulpit at preſent;—conſider,
" young people muſt have amuſement."

" Whether in or out of the pulpit, Ma-
" dam, (for I do not perceive myſelf in-
" ſpired with a peculiar ſet of ideas on
" mounting the roſtrum) I am no enemy
" to reaſonable relaxation; but I think a
" young woman of capacity may contrive
" to enjoy it, without running eternally
" through the mazes of folly, or whirling
" in the vortices of faſhion in ſearch of that
" amuſement which is never to be found
" in them!—Private life is the only orbit
" in which your ſex can revolve with pro-
" priety, and ſhe that fulfils the duties of
" it with adequate punctuality, will not
" find herſelf neceſſitated to fill up the
" dreary vacuum of her life with frivolous
" converſations—irrational entertainments,
" and debaſing pleaſures!"

" I pro-

"I proteſt that's very true," cried Aunt Sophy, "there are ſo many little things "to be done about a houſe, that what "with one thing and what with another, "I know, for my part, if the day were "twice as long, I ſhould find enough and "enough to do"

"The Greeks," reſumed the Dean, without replying to Aunt Sophy's obſervations,—"though by no means ſo ſevere "in their treatment of the female ſex, as "the Perſians and other barbarous na-"tions, ſeldom permitted them to leave "their dwellings; or, if on ſome parti-"cular occaſion this privilege was allowed "them, they were accompanied by a guar-"dian, who was uſually an old man—a "reverend perſonage, whoſe age and ex-"perience might correct their levity and "direct their conduct.—Of this cuſtom "we find various inſtances in the works of "the Grecian Poets—in their dramatic "writings, more eſpecially, which are "more peculiarly adapted to pourtray the "manners of the age in which they were "written.

written. If you underſtood Greek, I could repeat to you various paſſages ſelected from Sophocles, Euripides and other Greek authors, which would greatly illuſtrate this ſubject, together with their other cuſtom of allotting to their women the moſt diſtant apartments of their manſions, and frequently devoting to their uſe the upper ſtories."

"Oh the Goths!—the Vandals!—the deteſtable wretches!" exclaimed her ladyſhip—"I never heard any thing ſo ſhocking!—I am ſure I am glad I was not born amongſt ſuch ſavages."

"You are unconſcious of the bleſſings you deſpiſe through ignorance," replied the Dean. "Happy would you have been to have received your exiſtence amongſt that wiſe and virtuous people."

"A great happineſs indeed, to be ſhut up in a garret, and never let out of it without an old cynical grey beard ſnarling at my ſide! I wonder you don't get yourſelf exported to that country—you'd

"make

" make the moſt charming guardian in the
" world *a la-mode a Grece*, and if ever your
" wards went aſtray, I am ſure it would
" not be for want of long preachments and
" wiſe lectures."

The Dean was going to reply to her ladyſhip in terms not the moſt tender or reſpectful, as I could eaſily prognoſticate from the aſperity of his countenance, when their contention was interrupted by a ſtill more dreadful affray, which aroſe between her ladyſhip's Spadill and Manill, and my grandfather's Nero. The tyrant treated the poor Matadores with the utmoſt inhumanity—Manill flew yelping for protection to the arms of his miſtreſs, and even the all-conquering Spadill, unable to withſtand the victorious paw of his enemy, was obliged to make an inglorious retreat from the field, and retire to his entrenchments beneath her ladyſhip's hoop petticoat. All was anarchy and confuſion. The yelling of the curs, and the violent exclamations of the miſtreſs, mingled with the hoarſe growlings of the tyrant, formed a concert

little

little inferior to an Indian funeral ſong. The poor Dean, who was obliged to put his hands to his ears, exhibited an exact repreſentation of Hogarth's enraged muſician.

Time, however, abated the extravagance of the lady's affliction; it became ſoftened to a tender melancholy, and ſhe began (with ſtronger indications of piety than I had ever before perceived in her manners) to thank heaven that ſhe had left the poor dear Baſto at home this evening, who, ſhe gave us to underſtand, laboured under a ſevere fit of the aſthma, and was withal afflicted with an incurable rheumatiſm.

"I have tried a thouſand remedies without the leaſt effect," ſaid ſhe.

"I can recommend your ladyſhip an unfailing noſtrum," cried the Dean.

"Oh, my dear Dean you'll oblige me eternally, and I'll forgive you every thing, if you will but tell me what it is."

"A rope," cried the Dean, ſternly.

"A rope!—good heaven—for what?"

"To

" To get him hanged with."

" To get the ſweet creature hanged!—
" No, truely, he is bad enough already, and
" if this be the beſt advice your Deanſhip
" can afford me, I beg you will keep it to
" yourſelf for the future. I am ſurprized
" that people can have ſo little compaſ-
" ſion—and eſpecially that a perſon of your
" profeſſion can adviſe me to ſuch an in-
" human action."

" Far be it from me," replied the Dean,
" to authorize by my ſanction an act of in-
" humanity. Little would it become a
" miniſter of the goſpel to inculcate a diſ-
" poſition ſo diametrically oppoſite to its
" divinely compaſſionate precepts! ' The
' merciful man,' ſaith a ſacred writer,
' will be merciful to his beaſt,'—and when
" a poor wretched brute is diſeaſed to the
" degree you ſpeak of, is it not the higheſt
" mercy you can poſſibly confer on him to
" put a period to his miſerable exiſtence?"

" Fine doctrine indeed!—So, by this
" rule I have nothing to do but go home
" and get ſome one to knock poor Sir

" Humphry

" Humphry on the head, becauſe his life
" is become a burden to himſelf, and to
" every one about him!"

" Merciful heaven!" cried the Dean,
" do you make no diſtinction between your
" cur, and your huſband! — between a
" brute animal, and a creature inveſted
" with the dignity of humanity, endued
" with the faculty of reflection, and in-
" ſpired with a rational and immortal ſoul?
" Such a propoſition muſt neceſſarily ori-
" ginate either from the groſſeſt ignorance,
" or the rankeſt atheiſm; and—"

" Well, well,"—interrupted her lady-
ſhip, " I have not time to chop logic at
" preſent—but if you have a mind to han-
" dle this text at church next Sunday,
" I'll be there, if I can get dreſt in time;
" indeed, in this deteſtably ſtupid country,
" it is the only place where one can ſee
" and be ſeen—Good night, Lady Bloom-
" field; Delia, farewell, my dear."

So ſaying, her ladyſhip made her exit with Spadill under her right arm, and Manill under her left.

" If

"If I were obliged to aſcertain the lo-
"cality of hell," cried the Dean, "I
"would fix it in that woman's ſociety;
"and if I were a catholic, inſtead of ſtripe-
"ing and lacerating my outward-man on
"ſeaſons of peculiar mortification and
"auſterity, I ſhould inflict on myſelf the
"more ſevere and efficacious pennance of
"attending to her abſurdities!"

"It is true," ſaid my grandmother,
"that though well-meaning and friendly,
"her conduct in many reſpects is highly
"ridiculous. But where people are ſo
"confirmed in their habits as to render re-
"proof unavailing, is it not the wiſeſt
"way to endeavour to bear their infirmi-
"ties with patience, and behold them
"with charity? By a contrary conduct we
"only incenſe them and diſturb ourſelves,
"interrupt the freedom of converſation
"and damp the ſpirit of chearfulneſs."

"Your reflections are perfectly juſt,"
replied the Dean, "if only applied to the
"generality of people; but my profeſſion
"entitles me to an exemption from the
"obſervance

" obſervance of common forms, and even " renders it an indiſpenſible duty to enter " my proteſt againſt vice and folly, how " richly ſoever they may be endowed by " fortune; how highly ſoever they may " be dignified by rank. But, abſtracted " from theſe material conſiderations, at " that woman's impertinence I cannot re- " preſs my indignation! A fine precep- " treſs Sir Humphry's wards are likely to " be bleſſed with! If I had an infant, " blooming and beautiful as the roſe of " Sharon, I would truſt its education with " the ſavages of America, and ſuffer them " to mould its head in the form of a cone, " rather than deliver it to the tuition of a " wretch who would twiſt and pervert " its intellectual capacity, and render it as " crooked and diſtorted as her own."

" Beſides," quoth Aunt Sophy, " I " have often heard, that a long head was " a token of wiſdom."

" Then ſome people ſhould have very " ſhort ones!" muttered the Dean, glancing a ſatyrical look at my poor Aunt.

The

The weather begins to grow very delightful, and Lord Archer is in raptures with the beauties of the country.—Sir Richard, he and I are to make a little tour for his amuſement; we are to ſet off to-morrow, and ſhall be abſent ſix or eight days, as we are to viſit our couſins the Willmots, who reſide in the county of Wexford.

I have got a fine boy and girl ſince my return from Dublin; you will ſay I have been very expeditious. The truth is, I found them ready faſhioned to my hand, by my poor foſter-ſiſter Ellen, who died laſt Thurſday night. Her departure was ſudden—I knew not of her illneſs, until a few hours before her death. I flew to her the inſtant I was informed of it, and though it was paſt twelve at night, Aunt Sophy accompanied me. She was ſenſible to the laſt moment, and her thoughts ſeemed entirely engroſſed by the forlorn and helpleſs ſituation of her orphan children; but when I "bad her be of good cheer," and aſſured that I would be myſelf a mother to them;

them; would ſuperintend their education and provide for their ſupport—ſhe graſped my hands to her pale trembling lips, and without uttering a ſentence, expired in a tranſport of gratitude and joy. Never was I a witneſs to a ſcene ſo affecting!

Until now, Henrietta, I never was ſatisfied with myſelf. I gave money, it is true—but in thoſe who are bleſſed by heaven with an ample fortune and a liberal heart, how ſmall an exertion of benevolence does it require to ſhare with others that wealth which to themſelves is ſuperfluous. Sacred, my poor Ellen, are the obligations by which I have engaged myſelf, and ill ſhould I perform them, were I to content myſelf by ſupplying your children with the neceſſaries of life, without inſpecting their education and forming their morals.

After ſome deliberation, I determined, with the advice of my grandmother, to put my wards to ſchool with Madge Hopkins. "The matron old, whom we ſchool-miſ-"treſs name." I might have kept them in the houſe, if I wiſhed it, but though I

believe our ſervants to be faithful and honeſt, in general, if I had permitted my little ones to remain amongſt them, I could ſcarcely expect them to retain that integrity of heart and ſimplicity of manners, of which their preſent governeſs will ſhew them ſo amiable an example. She demanded but ten guineas a year, for the board and tuition of both, and I have with difficulty prevailed on her to accept fourteen.

Every evening Lord Archer and I viſit our *babes of the wood.* Already their little breaſts are dilated with gratitude, and when they diſcern us at a diſtance amongſt the trees, they fly to us bounding and ſkipping like young roes. Willy expreſſes his joy by jumping round me in ſportive circles, and Ellen creeps to my ſide, and holding my gown, looks up in my eyes with that timid and innocent expreſſion of countenance, which in their mother was ſo very engaging. Satisfied with the tender care of their granny, as Hopkins has taught them to call her, they have already almoſt

forgotten

forgotten their mother. Happy and enviable ductility of the infant mind! No gloomy retroſpections overcaſt its ſerenity; but the ſorrows of the paſt moment are for ever obliterated by the pleaſures of the preſent.

Now, my dear Henrietta, will you ſtill contend this point with me, and maintain that the marriage ſtate affords greater opportunities for the exertions of benevolence and virtue than the ſingle—I mean in general. You may undoubtedly ſet caſes where your arguments would be unanſwerable—for even the crown of martyrdom is a reward inadequate to the heroic virtues of the woman, who perſiſts to the laſt, in a religious performance of her duty to a huſband, worthleſs, hardened and ungrateful—a profligate or a tyrant;—the crown of martyrdom!—One ſingle effort of virtue may obtain it; and the horrors of death are illumined by the ſplendour of the glorious immortality it confers! But to ſuſtain a perpetual warfare with the feelings—unſeen and unpitied, to ſuffer a

fate more dreadful than a thouſand deaths —meekly to ſubmit to the caprices, and drag with uncomplaining patience the iron chain of an unfeeling taſk-maſter.—Peace be to your manes—ye amiable—ye illuſtrious heroines! may unfading laurels ſhade your conſecrated tombs! From an humble diſtance and with reverential awe I look up to your ſuperior virtues—but never—never ſhould I poſſeſs the magnanimity to emulate them.—Henrietta, I would fly from the frown of a deſpotic huſband to

"Diſtant, barbarous climes!
"Rivers unknown to ſong."

But if we are connected with men of worthy and gentle diſpoſitions—"if we "love thoſe that love us," what merit have we? If we ſupport and cheriſh our own offspring—do not even the brutes the ſame? It is philanthrophy which ennobles our natures; which, ſuperior to the partial ties of inſtinct, with divinely expanſive benevolence, adopts the orphan, conſoles the widow, and ſnatches its victim from the

the hard hand of oppreſſion. Elevated and refined by this ſublime principle, the ſoul of man is but a "*little lower than the* "*angels*"—diveſt him of it, and he ſinks beneath the level of the *brutes that periſh!*

Do you perceive, Henrietta, that I have a very pretty knack at preaching? It is a thouſand pities that my talent ſhould thus lie buried in the ground. I have a mind to circulate it for the good of ſociety by turning quaker preacher. Ah! how ſhould I be enchanted at finding myſelf erected into a ſage expoſitor; and ſurrounded by a congregation of broad-brimmed brethren and black-hooded ſiſters, liſtening with delightful wonderment to my pious exhortations, and at ſolemn intervals expreſſing their admiration of my wiſdom and eloquence by [pathetic grunts and] ſpiritual groanings! Adieu—the Dean is below with Aunt Sophy—I am impatient to communicate my new project to him.

DELIA BLOOMFIELD.

LETTER XL.

Delia Bloomfield to *Henrietta Willmore.*

SO, Lord Hermont has been here during my abſence! Was there ever ſo unfortunate an heroine! He ſtaid but two days, one of which was ſpent at Bloomfield—he is a mighty favourite with the antients, I perceive. Aunt Sophy ſmirks and chuckles whenever he is mentioned. You know ſhe formed matrimonial deſigns on him before ſhe ever ſaw him. I heard her yeſterday endeavouring to ſound Wentworth in reſpect to his friend's ſentiments —but ſhe could make nothing of him. How can we be ſurprized at the vanity which induces ſome young women to metamorphoſe every man who treats them with tolerable civility, into a lover, when their folly receives a ſanction from thoſe whoſe years and experience ought to enable them

to

to correct inſtead of encouraging by their example ſo ridiculous an error!

Our tour was extremely agreeable, we ſpent two days at Mr. Willmot's, which was as long as I wiſhed to remain there.—You know I never admired your good ſort of people—and Mrs. Willmot has trained up her daughters to emulate her own perfections, and become the greateſt houſewives in the country. Now, though I have no objection to a moderate ſhare of notability, I can ſee no reaſon why the agreeable may not be blended with the uſeful, or why the daughters of a man of fortune, ſhould be educated like thoſe of a farmer.

But to ſay the truth, this is an error not very univerſal—people of weak underſtandings are ever in extremes—and Mrs. Willmot, apprehenſive of inſpiring her girls with high notions, as ſhe expreſſes it, has ſuffered them to dengerate into downright ruſticity. I liſtened in ſilence to the harangues of the good dame on this ſubject, and ſuffered her to enjoy without moleſ-

tation the idea of her own wonderful ſagacity—For to be able to comprehend that pride is the child of ignorance, and that a good education is the moſt effectual ſecurity againſt a vain and oſtentatious diſpoſition, requires more rationality than ſhe happens to be bleſſed with.

Her ſons, who have been educated under the ſuperintendance of their father, are well enough *for college ſophs.* As we were ſo fortunate as to make our viſit in vacation time, we had the pleaſure of their company, which was as agreeable as that of creatures of this kind generally are. Indeed, their converſation was greatly preferable to that of their ſiſters,—and if they had been leſs profuſe of it, I ſhould have liked it very well; but as they thought it incumbent on them to be gallant to me, they ſuffered me not to enjoy a moment's compoſure—and when one, wearied with his laborious efforts to entertain me, pauſed to take breath, his poſt was inſtantly ſupplied by his brother, who returned to the charge and abſolutely deafened me with unceaſing

unceaſing volubility. Lord Archer only laughed at my diſtreſs; indeed, I never ſaw him in better ſpirits; though ſince his return, I think I ſometimes perceive an air of melancholy, which was ſo very viſible in Dublin. It is true, his ſituation is in many reſpects diſagreeable to a man of his high ſpirit.—He is going to-morrow to Dublin, on buſineſs, which will detain him for ſome days. How do you exiſt without Wentworth?—Adieu.

DELIA BLOOMFIELD.

LETTER XLI.

From the Same.

YOU do not write to me, my dear Henrietta! — But no matter — I am not uneaſy.—I will ſuppoſe that your time is wholly engroſſed by your attendance on your mother.—I will ſuppoſe any thing ra-

ther than that you can ceaſe to love or to remember me, even for an inſtant.

You have ſeen Lord Archer, before now —I deſired him to ſcold you for me—for indeed it is an office I ſhould always wiſh to perform by proxy. I proteſt I do not know how to live without him—yet I cannot reaſonably hope to detain him here always. Like Achilles in petticoats, I think he grows uneaſy at the reſtraint—a martial ſpirit ſometimes breaks out, and he ſpeaks of wars and bloodſhed with an animation that terrifies me. Many circumſtances conſpire to convince me he harbours ſome ſecret deſign.

The Dean is grown ſo good, that he is good for nothing—ſo patient, that there's no teazing him. Wentworth is ſo tender and ſo abſent, that he is quite ſtupifying, and were it not that Providence has ſent Lady Mordaunt to my relief, I ſhould have no one to laugh at, which to me is a ſore evil.

The Dean entreated us yeſterday to accompany him this morning to Wood-park.

" The

"The viſitation of pariſhioners," ſaid he, "I regard as an indiſpenſible duty, "and indeed, abſtracted from every other "conſideration, my eſteem for the good "Sir Humphry, is ſufficiently prevalent "to impel me not to with-hold from him "the comfort and conſolation, which the "reviving converſe of a friend may be ex-"pected to adminiſter.—But my exertions "in this reſpect are rendered totally inef-"ficacious by the preſence of his wife, "and unleſs there are ſome other objects "to divert the current of her impertinence "into a different channel—the torrent "ruſhes with a rapidity which utterly over-"powers me, and inſtead of offering con-"ſolation to the ſufferings of others, I am "no longer able to ſupport my own."

We all went with him this morning, and Lady Mordaunt, who is always the ſame, received us with her uſual good humour.

"You can't think how much I am "obliged to you for this viſit," cried ſhe, running into the hall to meet us.—"I pro-"teſt, Sir Richard, you never looked ſo

" charming in your life—As I ſaid to Sir " Humphry the other day, when you paſ- " ſed us on horſeback in the glen of the " downs—There goes Sir Richard Bloom- " field, the evergreen, ſays I.—Dean Sedly, " are you as fond of whiſt and back- " gammon as you uſed to be?—I don't " know how it is, but faſhion reconciles " us to every thing. Whiſt uſed to be " my averſion, and now it is become my " ruling paſſion. I vow, my dear Dean, " you look enchantingly to-day; you have " got ſuch a monſtrous complexion"—

" A monſtrous complexion!" repeated the Dean, " ſo has the ſign of the Red " Lion oppoſite your gate, and to him " you might with more propriety have ad- " dreſſed your compliment—if you meant " it for ſuch!"

" Lord, Mrs. Bloomfield," cried her ladyſhip, without attending to the Dean's anſwer, " I never ſaw any one ſo infatu- " ated with black bonnets! Why don't " you get a veil? They are the moſt be- " coming things in the world—they make

" every

" every creature look fair—and the eyes " look ſo bright through them— I ima- " gine a white one would ſuit your com- " plexion beſt."

" No ſuch frippery dab ſhall ſuit my " complexion, I promiſe you," cried Aunt Sophy — " Things of this kind " may do well enough for a girl like Delia " there; but a good ſnug bonnet is the " fitteſt covering for a grey head. People " ſhould adapt their dreſs to their time of " life,—and let me tell you, Lady Mor- " daunt, it looks very ridiculous to ſee " women of our age tifted out like girls " of ſixteen."

" O that's very true," replied her la- dyſhip, " you ſee now I never go without " a tippet or ſomething that way."

" You might as well have nothing, I'm " ſure, as that little frizzled thing run " through a ring. Now, if you would " take my advice, you'd get yourſelf a " good warm ſhaul to put about you, " which would at once be decent and " comfortable."

" Decent

"Decent and comfortable!" exclaimed her ladyſhip. "O hideous! Heaven for-
"bid I ſhould ever wear any thing decent
"and comfortable.—But here comes Sir
"Humphry—he is the moſt hippiſh crea-
"ture!—you can't imagine how I am tor-
"mented with him. If you tell him he
"looks ill, I ſhall have no peace this
"month"

Sir Humphry now crawled into the room, and ſhaking us alternately by the hand, welcomed us to Wood-park—But his ſalutations were interſperſed with abundance of ſighs and groans.

"Well, my good friend," ſaid my grandfather, "how does the country agree
"with you?"

"Very ill, Sir Richard, very ill truely.
"I never was worſe in my life—never was
"worſe."

"How can you ſay ſo, Sir Humphry," cried Lady Mordaunt, "you were a great
"deal worſe. I am ſure you ſleep well
"and have an extraordinary good ap-
"petite."

"Good

"Good appetite, Lady Mordaunt!—I "am ſurprized you can ſay ſo, when you "know it was with the utmoſt difficulty I "could get down the white of a chicken, "and a couple of little woodcocks at din-"ner yeſterday—Oh I am in a wretched "ſituation! a wretched ſituation, indeed! "My eyes are like two burning bullets in "their ſockets—my ſkull feels as if ſome "one was cleaving it open with a hatchet "—every bone as if a ravenous hound was "gnawing it—my lungs are preſſed down "with an immoveable weight—I am ſo "inflated with wind, that from the hor-"rible inteſtine combuſtions with which "I am tormented, I cannot help fancying "I am poſſeſſed by a legion of evil "ſpirits."

"And ſo you are," ſaid her ladyſhip—"by the worſt of all ſpirits—thoſe of "grumbling and diſcontent."

A ſervant entered to inform her, that her meſſenger was returned from Dublin. "O this is moſt fortunate!—Now Delia "Bloomfield, you will have an opportu-

"nity

" nity of ſeeing my trimmings.—Go, bring " the band-boxes—Aye," ſaid Sir Humphry—" and bring the beaver night-cap, " and flannel ſhirt and ſocks I ſent for—I " long to ſee if they are of the right ſort— " may be, they may be of ſome ſervice— " Lord knows, I greatly want relief."

" Now," cried her ladyſhip, whilſt ſhe opened the boxes, " you ſhall ſee the " moſt beautiful ſuit in the world.—I " hoped to have had them for the birth- " night—it was a terrible diſappointment! " I waited until the ſixteenth, and was " then obliged to make up a young Veſ- " tris ſattin with gold fringe."

The trimmings were done in coloured foils, on a ground of green gauze, very ſhewy and paultry.

" O beautiful! O charming," exclaimed ſhe, as ſhe took them out, " how I long " to wear them!—But I'll put them up " for the birth-night in June. I'll put " the broad trimmings on a pink-coloured " petticoat—and the mant ſhall be Italian

" gauze

" gauze, edged with the narrow.—Don't
" you think them vaſtly cheap of ſe-
" venty guineas? Well, certainly, in
" point of taſte we muſt yield to the
" French. Why don't you look at them,
" Dean Sedly?"

" I ſee them," replied the Dean, " and
" they forcibly recall to my recollection
" thoſe flowered garments which were
" appropriated by Solon — that greateſt
" of all legiſlators, to the uſe of the Athe-
" nian courtezans, who were neceſſitated
" to wear them as the diſtinguiſhing
" badges of their infamous profeſſion."

" I don't in the leaſt doubt it.—No
" people in the world dreſs with more
" taſte and elegance than your ladies of
" pleaſure. Were the trimmings you
" ſpeak of, as pretty as theſe? Was it in
" Paris, you ſaw them?—"

" I ſaw them," cried the Dean, " Hea-
" ven and earth what an interrogation!
" Do you take me for an Antediluvian!
" The garments I adverted to, were worn

" ſome

" ſome centuries antecedent to the Chriſ-
" tian æra!"

" O amazing!—Well I had no idea
" that coloured trimmings were ſo long in
" faſhion—however, I dare ſay they were
" not done in foils—that, at leaſt, is a
" modern invention."

The Dean perfectly grinned with ſpite, and ſtarting on his feet, aſked my grandfather to take a walk in the garden.

Poor Sir Humphry, meantime, had retired to a corner of the room, where he had amuſed himſelf with examining his woollen accoutrements, with which he appeared as much delighted and as entirely occupied as his lady had been with her French frippery.

Thus did this reſpectable pair amble away on their reſpective hobby-horſes, all the time we ſtaid.—Nor is it eaſy to decide which approached neareſt to the goal of ridicule. In favour of her ladyſhip's folly, it may be alledged, that it renders herſelf happy without materially injuring any other perſon; whilſt Sir Humphry's hypochondriacs,

driacs, make himſelf and every one connected with him, miſerable.

Adieu.

DELIA BLOOMFIELD.

LETTER XLII.

Delia Bloomfield to *Henrietta Willmore.*

Bloomfield, 1ſt May, 1782.

WE are going to dine at Sir Humphry's to-day—his illuſtrious wards are arrived, and I ſuppoſe this entertainment is made for the purpoſe of exhibiting them to all the country. I hoped Lord Archer would have been home before now—Lady Mordaunt ſent a card to him—his title alone would be ſufficient to enſure him a joyful reception.—The Dean has been prevailed

prevailed on to accompany us, though he conſented with a very ill grace.

The Franklins are returned from Spa—I ſuppoſe we ſhall meet them at Sir Humphry's. They are an amiable family—I love and eſteem them, and yet the idea of meeting them gives me pain. They were the play-fellows of my childhood—the witneſſes of my felicity. Bloomfield was the companion of our innocent amuſements—he was preſent at our laſt interview, and wiped from my cheek the tears that flowed on our ſeparation. Ah! what painful remembrances will their preſence recall. Perhaps they may even ſpeak to me on a ſubject which I could never hear mentioned with tranquility. And yet, you are my witneſs, Henrietta, that I did not meanly ſink beneath a misfortune the moſt afflictive that could poſſibly have befallen me. Acknowledge, that as a love-born damſel, I have borne my fate with tolerable fortitude. Indeed, I had ever a ſtrong averſion to be pitied;—by the generality of people, I mean. The tender compaſ-

ſion

ſion that ariſes in the boſom of ſympathetic friendſhip will ever be ſweet and ſoothing to affliction; but how different is this endearing ſentiment, from that inſulting compaſſion which the proud, the unfeeling and the impertinent ſo liberally beſtow on diſtreſs. I am not an advocate for hypocriſy—but ſurely, the moſt unremitting aſſiduity to conceal from our deareſt connections, ſenſations which can no longer be indulged with propriety, deſerves not that deteſted appellation. If it does, how guilty is your Delia!—Why do I write—why do I think on this ſubject!—I wiſh to blot it from my thoughts for ever.

It is weak—it is mean and unworthy to ſuffer the tranquility of the mind to depend on an object which no longer merits our attachment—how ſeverely have I upbraided myſelf with this folly, as if my fault were not in itſelf a ſufficient puniſhment. Yet circumſtanced as I was, Henrietta, was I not more excuſeable than the victims of an unrequited paſſion uſually are? Is it not natural to imagine, that the prepoſſeſſions we

we imbibe in our infancy—the attachments which "grow with our growth, and "ſtrengthen with our ſtrength," ſhould take a more laſting hold of the affections, than thoſe we conceive when arrived at riper years? Bloomfield was the firſt—the deareſt companion of my infancy — my friend—my brother—my preceptor! Enlightened by his converſation—inſtructed by his example—I endeavoured to tranſcribe in my own conduct the virtues and the graces which captivated me in his—In one perfection, at leaſt, I learned to excel the amiable original I imitated—that of ſtability in my affection. Our taſtes, our ſentiments, our wiſhes were ſimilar.—Our growing tenderneſs was perceived and approved by our friends, even before we were ourſelves aware of it. When ſeparated, we were encouraged to correſpond; in our letters we expreſſed without reſerve, the dictates of our mutual fondneſs —Dear happy hours of innocence and peace, ye are gone for ever!—Do not be too ſevere, my Henrietta; ſuffer me to enjoy the ſoft

ſatisfaction

ſatisfaction I can now experience,—the penſive pleaſures of reflection. Have three years elapſed ſince a ſeparation, every circumſtance of which is ſo freſh in my memory! When Bloomfield preſſed me to his boſom—when we exchanged our vows of eternal conſtancy and truth—could I diſtruſt his ſincerity?—But he was then ſincere—ſome other paſſion, perhaps—it is the weakneſs of humanity—who is perfect? Yes, my friend, I can forgive, I can pity his inconſtancy. In one inſtance he has been wanting, but his character muſt ſtill be good and amiable. His ingenuous nature could not ſtoop to hypocriſy, he did not meanly profeſs a paſſion he no longer felt—but tacitly confeſſed by ſilence the alteration of his heart. Ah, how dear muſt his infidelity have coſt him. I can compaſſionate the conflicts of his boſom—to my friendſhip, I think I could again reſtore him—but never to my love. But I will write no more in this ſtrain—melancholy is not natural to me,—and yet my gaiety is often ſuperficial—and my feelings

ings frequently remind me of the obſervation of the wiſe man—that "even in "laughter the heart is ſorrowful."

Aunt Sophy calls—Dreſt already and not above two hours at the toilet. Amazing expedition! Have you never obſerved, Henrietta, that extreme tediouſneſs is generally the concomitant of antient maidenhood? Poor ſouls! I doubt not but it is a real advantage to them, by enabling them to fill up thoſe heavy blanks in life, which, to active ſpirits are ſo very depreſſive.

Mrs. Jenny has dreſſed my hair remarkably well to-day—I never looked better—I wiſh you were here to ſee me. I am grown fat ſince my return from Dublin, and have got a delightful bloom.—The Dean is come without Wentworth. I'll go aſk what detains him. Adieu.

Henrietta, I ſhall no longer be reduced to the deplorable neceſſity of celebrating my own perfections; but for the future ſhall

ſhall take the more modeſt and uſual method of repeating the encomiums I receive from my adorers, with only a few additions and embelliſhments of my own.

"But where," you will aſk, "are "theſe adorers to be found?"

Not in the perſon of Wentworth—you have unconſionably monopoliz'd all his admiration, and he views me with as much indifference as if I was his great-grandmother. The Dean is a ſtill greater barbarian—yeſterday when I preſented myſelf before him, he was, as uſual, diſputing about politics with Sir Richard. My entrance prevented his antagoniſt's reply, and left him in poſſeſſion of the laſt word; a prerogative no human conſideration could induce him to relinquiſh. My grandfather contemplated my figure with that expreſſion of partial fondneſs, which ever animates his countenance on my approach.

"My Delia's dreſs is more than uſually "becoming to-day," ſaid he, "her orna- "ments are well choſen and elegantly "ſimple."

" Simple!" repeated the Dean, " you " have gotten ſtrange notions of ſimplicity, " Sir Richard. If you are one of thoſe " who miſtake the ſignification of the " word and confound ſimplicity with folly, " the application of the term may be per- " fectly unexceptionable." Then repeating in Latin ſome lines from Juvenal—" that " enormous tower of frippery and falſe " hair, thoſe projecting whale-bones which " utterly deſtroy the ſymmetry of the hu- " man figure, and give it a pyramidical " appearance — that profuſion of ſilk " ſweeping the floor as ſhe walks, favour " much of ſimplicity! No, no, my friend; " ſimplicity is an obſolete idea, now only " to be recognized in the performances of " the antients. The moderns have loſt it " entirely—a falſe taſte prevails in every " thing. In dreſs, in life, in manners, in " architecture, in gardening — confuſed " heaps of ornament thrown together " without deſign or fancy, have driven " beauty, elegance and ſimplicity from " the habitations of mankind. In the

" works

" works of the antients, as I have already " obſerved, ſimplicity is now only to be " diſcerned. In the ſacred writings,—in " the performances of Homer, of Theo- " crites, of Virgil."

" I imagined," interrupted I, " that " the latter poet was celebrated for taſte " and elegance, rather than ſimplicity."

" You imagined! How can you pre- " ſume to form any imagination, who are " incapable of underſtanding the antients " in their original excellence and beauty? " It is true, there are ſome moderns who " appear to have retained in their works, " a few faint glimmerings of the divine " fire which animated thoſe celeſtial ge- " niuſes. You have ſeen the paintings of " Raphael—you have read Milton's de- " ſcription of Eve—and theſe models, if " you were endued with a juſt perception " of the truly ſublime and beautiful, " would inſtruct you to correct in your " own perſon, that vile and meretricious " taſte in dreſs, which is at preſent ſo " prevalent."

"I do not diſpute," replied I, "the "wiſdom of your obſervations—as to the "figures of Raphael, the dreſſes are rich "and were doubtleſs very elegant when "they were in faſhion; but that you who "have ſo high an idea of female modeſty "and reſerve, ſhould wiſh me to adopt "the mode which our poor grandmother "Eve was neceſſitated to adopt."

"Abſurd," interrupted he, in a paſſion, "are you really an ideot, or is this "ſtupidity affected!"

"Hey-day!" cried Aunt Sophy, entering the room with her bonnet in her hand, "what's the matter now?"

"Only an ingenious device of his Dean-"ſhip's, madam," replied I,—"you "know he has ever profeſſed himſelf an "enemy to exceſs and luxury in dreſs, and "an enthuſiaſtic admirer of antient ſim-"plicity; conſiſtently with theſe ideas, "he has been adviſing me to throw aſide "theſe ſuperfluous ornaments, and imi-"tate the unſtudied graces of our original "mother in Paradiſe."

"Child,

"Child, child," cried the Dean, endeavouring to repreſs his choler, "Mrs. "Bloomfield is fortunately too well ac- "quainted with my principles, to be in- "fluenced by your inſinuations! Heaven "is my witneſs, I would much rather add "to your covering than diminiſh it. The "females of this generation are but too in- "clinable to nudity, which however beau- "tiful and becoming it might have been "in a ſtate of primeval excellence and pu- "rity, is by no means adapted to the ex- "treme relaxation of modern manners. "Neither indeed, would our climate or "conſtitution admit of it, even allowing "that our morals had been preſerved im- "maculate. We obſerve, Sir Richard, that "the beaſts are covered with fur, and the "birds with feathers. Nor would Provi- "dence, which has thus benevolently pro- "vided for the comfort and convenience of "inferior animals, have been leſs ſollicitous "for the preſervation and happineſs of the "human race, if they had not been endowed "with mental capacities, which enable them

" to ſupply by their induſtry thoſe ſeem-
" ing defects in their exterior conformation.
" In thoſe days when covering was unne-
" ceſſary, the temperature of the air was
" mild and genial — the elements were
" tranquil and ſerene. But thoſe happy
" times are gone for ever!"

He uttered the cloſe of this ſentence in a plaintive and melancholy tone of voice.

" I am glad of it," replied Aunt Sophy,
" for my part; if I was to live an hundred
" years, I could never be reconciled to
" going without clothes."

" How," replied the Dean; " do you
" rejoice that mankind have degenerated!
" that they have fallen from the ſtate of
" bliſs and innocence in which they were
" planted by the hand of heaven, and pre-
" cipitated themſelves by their rebellious
" paſſions into thoſe fearful depths of mi-
" ſery and guilt?"

" By no means," returned ſhe, " all I
" can ſay is, that I can't conceive how
" wearing clothes is a ſign either of miſery
" or guilt, though I am ſure, going with-
" out

" out them is often a ſtrong indication of " both—but come Delia—I proteſt, bro- " ther, they'll wait dinner for us."

So ſaying ſhe went to hurry my grandmother, and left the Dean in the ſtrangeſt frame of mind you can conceive. The oddity of his character is an unfailing ſource of amuſement to me—and Aunt Sophy's manners form ſo ſtrong a contraſt to his, that nothing ſo much aſtoniſhes me as their mutual paſſion. But to delight in reconciling contrarieties, is one of the attributes of the whimſical deity. *Apropos* to Cupid—I have made a conqueſt. How could I waſte my time and exhauſt your patience, by repeating the rhapſodies of that fanciful Smellfungus, when a ſubject ſo important ſolicited my attention.

We found a great deal of company at Sir Humphry's—moſt of them our old neighbours, who were recalled to their ſeats, by the return of ſummer—amongſt the reſt were the Franklins, and our meeting was affectionate. But the moſt diſtinguiſhed figures in our circle were Sir

Humphry's wards. I know it is raſh to attempt drawing characters from a firſt impreſſion; and yet there are ſome of a ſtamp which can ſcarcely be miſconſtrued by the moſt ſuperficial obſerver; thoſe of Lady Narciſſa and Lady Catherine Stanly appear to be of this ſpecies.

Lady Narciſſa is tall, well-made, and would certainly be thought handſome by others, if ſhe could diveſt herſelf of that conſciouſneſs of beauty, which entirely deſtroys the effect of it. Her air and manner beſpeak her haughty and ſupercilious, and her converſation, with which ſhe eternally ſtuns the company, betrays an illiberal and uncultivated mind. In fine, with all the advantages of fortune, birth, youth and beauty, ſhe is one of the moſt diſagreeable beings I ever converſed with.

Her ſiſter is but a degree more ſufferable, though poſſeſſed of a very lovely form—if a form can be lovely without the leaſt animation. Lady Catharine is ſo perfectly inſipid, that if the Mahometan ladies had reſembled her, I ſhould not have

cenſured

cenſured their legiſlator for denying them the privilege of immortal ſouls. It would have been enough for the poor Muſſelmans to have been ſtupified with their company on earth, and they would have been excuſeable in wiſhing to ſolace themſelves in Paradiſe with the ſociety of their celeſtial houriis, who were undoubtedly damſels of ſpirit. Both ſiſters were dreſſed in the moſt tawdry extreme of the preſent tawdry faſhions. Their garments were various as the woof of Iris. We have read of the golden age, the ſilver age, the leaden age and the iron age. Surely future generations will diſtinguiſh this century by the appellation of the tinſel age. Lady Narciſſa ſurveyed my dreſs (which was white luteſtring) with the moſt contemptuous arrogance through her half cloſed eyes. The Myrvens arrived immediately after us—their eldeſt brother is returned from his travels—It was ſo long ſince I had ſeen him, that I had ſcarce any recollection of his features. He appears to be a well bred, agreeable young man. As we ſeated our-

ſelves at dinner, Lady Mordaunt informed us that ſhe had juſt received an apology from Lord Manſell and Mr. Seymor, who had promiſed her their company at dinner. This intelligence ſeemed to mortify poor Lady Narciſſa not a little—ſhe toſſed up her head, and ſaid, ſhe was ſurprized how people of faſhion could be ſo ſhockingly rude.

After ſitting above two hours and a half at table, a ceremony I ſhall always abominate, we went into the garden. I had then an opportunity of chatting to the Franklins. They did not ſpeak to me on a ſubject I greatly dreaded, though we ſpoke of the amuſements of our childhood, and reminded each other of our juvenile exploits. We were ſhortly afterwards ſummoned to tea. As the Franklins and I ſeated ourſelves at the large bow-window that fronts the lawn, we ſaw a magnificent phaeton drawn by ſix beautiful long tailed dapple greys, attended by half a dozen laced footmen, driving at a furious rate down the avenue.

"Oh," cried Lady Mordaunt, who ſtood ſpeaking to us at the window, "I "proteſt here's my Lord!—Well, I'm ſo "glad!"

At this information, the ladies at the other end of the room began to adjuſt their tippets and ſettle their gowns on their hoops. His Lordſhip entered—oh for the pencil of a Guido to pourtray this Adonis! His air, his dreſs, his manner—ſo elegant, ſo degagé, ſo much the man of faſhion! Such a becoming conſciouſneſs of his own ſuperiority—he apologized to Lady Mordaunt in a ſtrain ſo polite—which ſo plainly indicated a conviction of his having no neceſſity for any excuſe, and thinking it a condeſcenſion to make one.—Her ladyſhip, meantime, continued ſmiling and curtſeying with the utmoſt complacency.—When this farce was over, he threw himſelf with a ſtudied negligence into a chair, and amuſed himſelf with examining the company ſucceſſively through a pocket-glaſs. What a fop! whiſpered Lucy Franklin.

I heartily concurred in her opinion—but as it is a maxim of mine never to criticiſe any perſon who is preſent, I reſerved my animadverſions for a more convenient ſeaſon.

The ſplendor of his Lordſhip's charms had at firſt ſo dazzled my optics, as to render them incapable of diſcerning any other object. When they had recovered their uſual ſtrength, I looked round in ſearch of the gentleman who had been his companion—and beheld him ſitting in the moſt obſcure corner of the room. His appearance and manners were in every reſpect the reverſe of his Lordſhip's—his complexion was dark—his features were handſome and regular, only that his penetrating black eyes were almoſt obſcured by a pair of thick, dark eye-brows, which hung over them—his dreſs was plain and careleſs—and his whole air and manner ſtrongly characteriſtic of that ſomething, which is extremely well expreſſed by the word *gruff*. He ſeemed to pay little attention to the company, and amuſed himſelf with careſſing a great water-

water-ſpaniel, which lay with its fore paws acroſs his knees.

"So Seymor," ſaid Lord Manſell, "I think you have formed an attachment "already."

"Yes," replied he, in a voice none of the ſofteſt, "a dog is an honeſt animal, "and I am a friend to dogs, whatever "averſion I may entertain to puppies."

"Now," cried his Lordſhip, laughing, "only that proverbs are ſo damned go-"thic, I could quote one quite *apropos* to "your ſubject."

"Out with it, my Lord,—proverbs are "called the wiſdom of the antients, and it "is very proper that thoſe who have no "good ſenſe of their own, ſhould borrow "from ſuch as can afford to lend them."

This reply effectually ſilenced his Lordſhip.

After tea we were agreeably ſurprized to hear the fiddles ſtrike up in the ſaloon. The firſt idea that generally occurs on ſuch occaſions is, who we ſhall dance with. I caſt my eyes round in ſearch of Wentworth, who

who had been prevented from coming to dinner, by ſome of the pariſh duties which he performs for the Dean, but had promiſed to join us in the evening. Meantime Lord Manſell ſtood looking around him like the Grand Turk in his Seraglio, as if in doubt to which expecting fair one he ſhould deign to give the preference.

This was a matter about which I was very indifferent, as I had not vanity enough to dread the event of his deciſion:—at the ſame time, too, I ſaw young Franklin advancing towards me; when his Lordſhip ſuddenly turning, as if afraid of being prevented, haſtily approached me, and taking my hand with an affected air—

"May I hope, Madam, for the honour "and happineſs—"

I—you know, had nothing to do but to curtſey and appear delighted with my happineſs—in the latter part of my duty, however, I fear I was deficient; for his Lordſhip looked amazed at the coldneſs with which I received my good fortune,

whilſt

whilſt that ſtrange creature Seymor, who ſtood near us, appeared to enjoy it extremely.

"You mean to dance, Seymor?" ſaid Lord Manſell.

"Certainly," replied he; "I like dancing; it is an agreeable exerciſe and "braces the nerves—but as there are more "ladies than men, I am ſure of a partner."

I looked round to ſee how Lady Narciſſa was diſpoſed of, and, to my great ſatisfaction, beheld her ſitting without a partner, vexation and diſappointment ſtrongly pictured in her countenance. Fanny Myrven was her companion, but ſhe bore her fate with great good humour. Seymor approached them—the ſingularity of his manners fixed my attention; I was anxious to hear in what manner he would acquit himſelf in this critical ſituation; but he appeared not in the leaſt embarraſſed.

"I wiſh ladies," ſaid he, "I could dance "with you both; but as that is impoſſible, "diſpoſe of me as you pleaſe; to me it is "a matter of indifference."

Fanny

Fanny could ſcarce compoſe her countenance, whilſt Lady Narciſſa viewed him with the utmoſt contempt.—He, meantime, turned to my grandfather, and was making enquiries about the game the country produced. Lady Mordaunt, who was evidently fretted to ſee Lady Narciſſa ſo long without a partner, now interpoſed.

"Your ladyſhip," ſaid ſhe, "will have "no objection to dancing with the *ho-* "*nourable* Mr. Seymor,"—laying a particular emphaſis on the word *honourable*.

"So," cried Seymor,—"it is to the "honourable epithet attached to my name, "that I am to be indebted for a partner. "Well, be it ſo—the advantage, trifling "as it is, is greater than I uſually receive "from it."

As poor Lady Narciſſa was apparently extremely diſguſted with her allotted mate—Lady Mordaunt, to remedy this inconvenience, propoſed our changing every dance. I warmly eſpouſed this meaſure; — ſo warmly that his Lordſhip appeared chagrined, and made me a thouſand tender reproaches. I re-

I replied in a tone a little ſarcaſtic, I believe, "That no one could ſuſpect me of "changing from intereſted motives, when "I had the honour of dancing with his "Lordſhip."

Seymor, who overheard me, turned quick, and examined me with the moſt ſcrutinizing air, and the drolleſt expreſſion of countenance. "Take care what "you ſay, Madam," ſaid he; "your part-"ner is a fellow of ſuch conſummate "vanity, that he will receive the moſt ex-"travagant encomiums that ever fell from "the tongue of irony, as a tribute of ad-"miration, due to his ſuperlative per-"fection."

"If, Sir," replied I, "his Lordſhip "is ſo fond of flattery as you inſinuate, I "wonder he affects your ſociety; for, if I "am not greatly deceived in your charac-"ter, his vanity does not meet with much "encouragement from you."

He looked pleaſed with my anſwer.

"Your obſervation is juſt, Madam," returned he, "and yet I can ſtill prove

"vanity

" vanity to be the bond which mutually
" unites us. He, as you muſt have ob-
" ſerved the firſt moment you beheld him,
" builds his hopes of admiration on that
" pretty perſon of his, and the poliſhed
" graces (as he himſelf expreſſed) of his
" manners. Yet, conſcious that the
" brighteſt gem appears to moſt advantage
" with a foil, he flatters himſelf that the
" elegance of his appearance derives new
" luſtre from the ruggedneſs of mine—
" and I am attached to him from ſimilar
" motives; equally convinced that the
" converſation of a rational being never
" appears to ſo great advantage, as after
" we have been fatigued with the imper-
" tinence of a fop. You may yourſelf
" make the experiment, Madam, if you
" will favour me with your hand for the
" next ſet—by ſo doing, I dare ſay, you
" will gratify his Lordſhip, who by that
" time will have exhauſted his whole ſtock
" of obſervations and compliments; and
" your acceptance of me, will leave him
" at liberty to dazzle the eyes of ſome
" other

" other rural fair one with the blaze of " his accompliſhments."

" I now plainly perceive that his Lord- " ſhip's alliance with you is truly politic," replied I,—" your converſation, no leſs " than your appearance, diſplays him to " advantage, by giving him repeated op- " portunities of evincing his patience and " forbearance."

" Why, faith, Madam, your penetra- " tion has diſcovered the only virtues I " ever knew him poſſeſſed of—and even " for theſe he is indebted to me—as by " keeping them in perpetual exerciſe, I " have conſiderably ſtrengthened and aug- " mented them. But ſee, the company " have deſerted the room. I muſt go in " ſearch of my goddeſs—remember your " engagement."

" The ſtrangeſt creature," cried Lord Manſell, as he led me to the ball-room; " the ſtrangeſt creature that ever exiſted! " I was on the rack, leſt he ſhould have " uttered ſomething offenſive.—And yet " he is a well-meaning creature, in the " main;

" main; but the native roughneſs of his " diſpoſition has been heightened, even " to barbariſm by the ruſt contracted at " college, and increaſed by ſubſequent " ſtudy—I endeavour to bring him into " polite life, but in vain—nothing will " rub it off—the incruſtation is abſolutely " immoveable!"

Lady Narciſſa and Seymor led off a cotillon. I had the ſatisfaction to ſtand next them—he danced extremely well and appeared greatly entertained, but ſeldom addreſſed his partner, except to correct her when ſhe made *a faux pas*, and, " indeed, " ſhe gave him frequent opportunities." My hero was not ſo ſilent; but I have too much modeſty to repeat the delightful encomiums he laviſhed on me with profuſion. However, as I continually turned and repeated them to Seymor, I had the pleaſure of hearing him rally my poor little peer moſt unmercifully. As his Lordſhip now began to perceive I was not the ignorant country girl he firſt took me for, he began to converſe with rather more rationally,

tionality, than I thought him poſſeſſed of; indeed at the beſt, his portion of it is but ſmall; nor can a converſation be very delightful or inſtructive, which appears to be compounded of the pertneſs of the ſchool-boy, the conceit of the *petit maitre*, and the ſelf-ſufficient airs of the travelled coxcomb.

Whilſt we were going down the firſt dance, judge how much ſurprized I was to ſee Wentworth enter with Lord Archer. This was a pleaſure ſo unexpected, that I felt quite delighted, and ardently wiſhed the dance concluded. When we got to the bottom, I ran to Lord Archer; I am ſure my ſatisfaction was viſible in my countenance—but Henrietta, can you help me to account for the exceſſive conſtraint and the coldneſs of his manners? I was alarmed leſt ſomething diſtreſſing had happened.—

"My father—Lady Harriot!"

"Are perfectly well," interrupted he.

"My Henrietta—how is Lady Will-
"more?"

"No worſe than uſual. I had the
"pleaſure of ſeeing Henrietta Willmore
"yeſterday—ſhe is very well." He

He turned from me and went to pay his reſpects to the Dean and Sir Richard.

I know nothing more diſpleaſing than this coldneſs from a perſon we really eſteem. I was chilled by Lord Archer's behaviour, and was totally at a loſs to what cauſe to impute it. I returned to my place in a frame of mind much leſs agreeable, than that in which I had quitted it.

"What have you done with your vi-
"vacity," cried Seymor, "The preſence
"of thoſe beaux appears to ſhed a malig-
"nant influence on you; to what are we
"to attribute this ſtrange phenomenon?"

"What!" ſaid I, "are you ſo great a
"novice as to be ſurprized at a little in-
"conſiſtence in a perſon of my ſex?"

"No, Madam," replied my gallant partner,—"but Mr. Seymor is not ſo to-
"tally devoid of penetration, as not to
"have diſcovered that you riſe ſuperior to
"all the weakneſſes of your ſex."

"Truly," replied Seymor, "you give
"me credit for acuteneſs of penetration

"I do

" I do not poſſeſs; I have made no ſuch " notable diſcovery, I aſſure you."

" Neſt il pas un barbare, Madam?" ſaid his Lordſhip.

" Indeed not many degrees from the ſa- " vage ſtate," replied I.

" And yet," reſumed Lord Manſell, " the monſter is innocent; and though he " frequently growls, as at preſent, he " never proceeds to extremities. If you " would but condeſcend to bind him in " your chains, I dare ſwear you might " ſoon reduce him to a ſtate of domeſti- " cation."

" No, no," replied Seymor, " a mon- " key is the only ſavage I ever ſaw redu- " ced to female bondage, and your Lord- " ſhip is ſo admirably calculated to ſup- " port the character of that dear enchant- " ing animal, that if the office of Pug is " vacant, Madam, you can do nothing " ſo wiſe as to nominate my friend to the " ſucceſſion. It might be dangerous to " fondle and play with ſo rough a beaſt as " I am—but you can't conceive how well

" his

" his genius is adapted to the employ-
" ment; he has more miſchievous tricks
" than all the reſt of the ſpecies; but
" what renders him ineſtimable, is the
" gift of ſpeech; in him the various excel-
" lencies of the parrot are delightfully
" blended with the engaging qualities of
" the baboon—and nature ſeems to have
" formed him as an epitome of the per-
" fections of both ſpecies."

We had now finiſhed the firſt dance, and ſat down. Lord Manſell ſeated himſelf on one ſide of me, and Seymor placed Lady Narciſſa on the other, and was ſtanding before us, when Lord Archer and Wentworth approached us.

The former wore the reſerved air I before noticed.

" I want," ſaid I, addreſſing him, " to
" aſk you a thouſand queſtions relative to
" our friends in Dublin."

" It would give him real pleaſure," he ſaid, " to be able to give me any infor-
" mation that could conduce to my amuſe-
" ment; but would reſerve it for ſome
" future

" future period as at that time he was " convinced I could want no additional " entertainment."—Then turning to Miſs Myrven, aſked what dance ſhe intended to lead off?

" But, my Lord," ſaid Seymor, bluntly, " of what conſequence is it to you who " have no partner?" (Wentworth had engaged Fanny Myrven).

Archer at this unexpected addreſs, turned quite round and looked full in his face. " I am going to confer a favour on you," continued Seymor, " my head is grown " ſo curſedly giddy with whirling round " that I can ſcarcely ſtand, ſo if you pleaſe " I'll reſign to you my intereſt in this fair " lady. How ſhe came to be my help-" mate, I know not. We were ſhuffled " together by ſome ſtrange deſtiny. It " was a match of inclination on neither " ſide, I believe."

" I accept your favour with pleaſure, " Sir," replied Archer, " and muſt con-" feſs it receives additional value from " your ſingular mode of conferring it.

" But it may be proper to conſult the " lady's inclinations. What ſay you, " Madam, will you conſent to the di- " vorce?"

" With much more pleaſure than I did " to the union, my Lord."

" Right," cried Seymor, " I knew it " would be ſo—Now all parties are ſatis- " fied," then ſitting down by me in the ſeat Lord Manſell juſt then quitted and taking my hand—" well, my little ſpoſa " in futuro, muſt I repudiate you too? " Come, ſpeak ſincerely—Shall I abſolve " you from your engagement for the next " two dances? Perhaps you want to have " a little converſation with your friend " from Dublin, to whom I have juſt now " diſpoſed of my incumbrance; the con- " tract between them holds but for one " dance, you know, he will then be at li- " berty to make a ſecond choice."

" Why," replied I, " in compaſſion to " your head—"

" Huſh, huſh," cried he, " no com- " pliments! I hold them in utter deteſta- " tion;

" tion; however you have ſaid enough to
" convince me my propoſal is not diſ-
" agreeable."

" I candidly confeſs it is not," replied I.

" Now you are the girl I took you for;
" I am pleaſed with your ſincerity and will
" reward it by diſpoſing of myſelf elſe-
" where."

I was certain of being aſked by Lord Archer, when the ſet was out—but the monſter with unheard-of barbarity, took not the leaſt notice of me, but continued to dance with Lady Narciſſa I acknowledge I was mortified—eſpecially as every one elſe imagining me engaged to Seymor, had diſpoſed of themſelves, except Seymor, who ſat on the floor playing with his old companion, which he would not ſuffer the ſervants to turn out.

I had now no alternative but to ſit looking on, or condeſcend to the humiliating neceſſity of offering my hand to him—I reſolved on the latter, though by no means certain it would be accepted.

"How!" cried he, ſeeing me approach him, "where is your partner?"

"I have no partner," replied I, ſimply.

"You have been diſappointed then, and "come hither to excite my compaſſion."

"It is too true," ſaid I.

"You ſhall not ſolicit in vain," ſaid he, riſing; "I too have experienced the ſtings "of diſappointment, and a ſimilarity of "ſufferings ever conciliates affection."—Though he uttered the words with a ſmile, there was a ſenſibility in his manners which affected me.

I ſhould never have done, were I to repeat all our converſation, and my letter is already ſwelled to an unmerciful ſize. But if my prattle can diveſt one uneaſy reflection, or ſteal your thoughts, my Henrietta, from more diſquieting ſubjects, I ſhall eſteem the hours I devote to writing the beſt employed and happieſt of my life.

When the ſecond ſet was finiſhed, the muſicians left the room to refreſh themſelves, and the company deſcended into the garden. It was a delightful evening; the

the moon ſhone with unuſual luſtre, and the air was ſoft and refreſhing. But my good Aunt, than whom no enchanted dragon is more watchful, would not long permit me to enjoy this pleaſure. She ventured out herſelf in ſearch of me, and notwithſtanding my prayers and expoſtulations, compelled me to return with her to the houſe. Miſs Myrven, Lucy Franklin and her brother accompanied us. We ſeated ourſelves in the ball-room, Miſs Myrven and my Aunt engaged in converſation, and Lucy ſtood at the window; ſhe beckoned me to her. The ſaſh was open, but the curtain was down; the company were in the walk beneath, we could hear every word they uttered without being perceived by them.

"Liſten," cried Lucy, "you are the "topic."

"For my part," cried Lady Narciſſa, whoſe voice I could eaſily diſtinguiſh by its peculiar ſhrillneſs, "I could never ad-"mire any one with red hair."

" Red hair," repeated Seymor, " it " would be expedient for your ladyſhip to " apply to ſome experienced oculiſt, your " eyes muſt undoubtedly have ſome ter- " rible defect, or they could never ſo " greatly miſtake the colour of Delia " Bloomfield's hair, which is the moſt " beautiful I ever beheld."

" I am quite of your opinion," cried Lord Manſell.

" Baſe were the man who one bright treſs would ſpare,
" For all the ore of India's coarſer mould !"

" It recalls a thouſand claſſical ideas to " the imagination: ſuch treſſes ſtring the " bow of Cupid, and wanton on the ſnowy " boſom of his mother! Such were the " golden locks of the God of ſong and " eloquence, and ſuch"—

" Pſhaw," interrupted Seymor, " a " truce with your nonſenſe—cannot all " the company perceive Delia Bloomfield's " attractions without attending to your " rhapſodies? It were paying a ſorry com- " pliment to their diſcernment to ſuppoſe

" them

" them inſenſible to the beauty and ele-
" gance of her appearance, or the ſenſe,
" ſpirit and politeneſs of her converſation."

" Of the latter perfection, Sir," replied Lady Narciſſa, in a ſatyrical tone, " every " one muſt allow you to be a competent " judge."

" You do me no more than juſtice in " believing ſo, Madam," returned he; " for though I may be ſometimes a little " deficient in the practice of politeneſs, I " am ſufficiently converſant in the theory " to be able to diſtinguiſh pride from " dignity—levity from ſpirit, and affec-" tation from good breeding."

" Sir," replied the lady in a very angry tone, " if Sir Humphry had been ac-" quainted with your character, I am con-" vinced he would not have ſuffered ſuch " a monſter of rudeneſs to enter his doors! " —But I ſhall let him know to-morrow " morning, that if ever I ſee you here " again, I ſhall leave the houſe directly!"

" Heavens," cried Seymor, " how un-" fortunate I am in having thus unwit-

" tingly incurred your ladyſhip's diſplea-
" ſure!—Your ladyſhip whom, from the
" firſt moment I beheld you, I have con-
" ceived to be the ſtandard of taſte, the
" eſſence of elegance, and the flower of
" perfection!"

The return of the muſic recalled them to the room.—Lady Narciſſa flew to the drawing-room, where poor Sir Humphry ſat at cards with the Dean, &c.—and worried him with a clamorous complaint of the groſs inſults ſhe had received from Seymor;—proteſting at the ſame time, that unleſs he would conſent to aſk her pardon, ſhe would retire immediately to her apartment and keep herſelf inviſible for the remainder of the evening. This reſolution reduced poor Sir Humphry to a deplorable dilemma. He ſighed and groaned piteouſly—and conjured her ladyſhip to take compaſſion on the ſhattered ſtate of his nerves, and not inſiſt on a condition ſo diſagreeable. Nothing could ſoften the little tygreſs—and at length it was agreed that Lady Mordaunt ſhould be deputed

deputed an ambaſſadreſs to Seymor. It was an infinite misfortune to me, that I was not preſent at this curious ſcene.—I ſaw her enter the ball-room and whiſper Seymor—who laughed moſt immoderately; and promiſed to comply with her requeſt as ſoon as he could ſummon a ſufficient ſtock of gravity to go through the awful ſolemnity with the decency it required. They ſoon after went out together—but had I known their buſineſs, nothing ſhould have prevented me from following them. The ſcene muſt have been exquiſitely ridiculous. Shortly after we ſeated ourſelves between the dances—on turning behind me I found Seymor leaning over the back of my chair, and attentively employed in examining my hair.

"You know not in what a dire adven-
"ture I have been enſnared by thoſe locks
"of yours."

"I do indeed," replied I, "for I over-
"heard your conteſt from the window."

"Indeed!—And are you ſo graceleſs as
"to acknowledge this without bluſhing?"

" tingly incurred your ladyſhip's diſplea-
" ſure!—Your ladyſhip whom, from the
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"Indeed!—And are you ſo graceleſs as
"to acknowledge this without bluſhing?"

" Modeſty is entirely out of the queſ-
" tion," ſaid I, " as you'll acknowledge,
" if you'll be pleaſed to recollect that the
" motive which prompted your extrava-
" gant praiſes, was no other than a ma-
" licious deſire of mortifying and contra-
" dicting poor Lady Narciſſa. You po-
" ſitively maintained that my hair was not
" red, and you now come to diſcover if
" there was any truth in the aſſertion."

" Give me your hand," ſaid he,—" I
" perceive we begin to underſtand each
" others characters. I wiſh you may al-
" ways retain the power of diſtinguiſhing
" modeſt commendation from my hyper-
" bole, and poſſeſs the uncommon mode-
" ration to prefer the former.—However,
" I have now made my peace with the ir-
" ritated fair one, and never ſhall I con-
" tradict her for the future, even though
" ſhe ſhould aſſert that your treſſes are as
" fiery as thoſe of Berenice:—the lady
" whoſe perriwig was formerly tranſlated
" to the ſkies, and ſtill ſhines there by
" way of a conſtellation!"

I danced

I danced the reſt of the evening with Seymor and Lord Manſell. Archer never aſked me; I was piqued at his indifference and took no farther notice of him. We had ſome good ſinging after ſupper; Seymor's voice is a very agreeable baſs. Lady Narciſſa was called on, and after keeping us half an hour liſtening to her proteſtations that ſhe ſang moſt deteſtably—that ſhe had not ſung for an age—that ſhe had got ſuch an immenſe hoarſeneſs her voice was quite horrid—that ſhe had not a ſong in the world—that ſhe ſhould abſolutely frighten us with the noiſe ſhe ſhould make, &c. &c. &c. ſhe began an Italian air in accents, which had a much nearer reſemblance to the ſcreamings of a peacock, than the tones of a human voice.—Though it was palpable that ſhe thought them more melodious than the warblings of Philomel;—but the worſt of it was, that ſhe made ſuch frightful faces, and extended her mouth whilſt ſhe ſang to ſuch a degree, that it was with the utmoſt difficulty I could preſerve my gravity.—Manſell, who

had amuſed himſelf with flirting my fan, now ſpread it before his face and indulged his propenſity to laughter.

" Braviſſimo," cried he, with affected rapture, as ſoon as ſhe had done; " what " an enchanting vehicle for Italian muſic " is your ladyſhip's raviſhing pipe!"

Then again covering his face with the fan whilſt he whiſpered in my ear—" Did " you ever hear any thing ſo diabolical! " — it was abſolutely intolerable — the " ſcreaming of owls — the rumbling of " drays—nay even the croaking of frogs " would be harmony compared to it!" " O ciel quelle horreur!"

I was next ſolicited to ſing—my divine melody threw his Lordſhip almoſt into hyſterics.—But I told him I had received too recent a proof of his hypocriſy to be greatly gratified by his tranſports.

" You have judgment, I perceive," ſaid Seymor; " you play, I ſuppoſe?"

" I do," ſaid I.

" Well then, I'll give you a viſit ſome " day; I like a ride in the mornings."

" You

"You are extremely condeſcending," replied I.

"I think ſo too;—for as I am a ſtranger, "civility would oblige you to make the "firſt viſit; but I am contented to wave "theſe idle ceremonies."

We broke up about four o'clock. My grandfather and grandmother had gone long before, and left Aunt Sophy to matronize me. Lord Manſell conducted me to the carriage, and moſt obſequiouſly entreated permiſſion to wait on me, a favour I graciouſly accorded him.

Aunt Sophy and I ſat on one ſide of the coach, and Lord Archer placed himſelf on the other.

"Did your Lordſhip ever meet Lord "Manſell, before?" aſked Aunt Sophy.

"Yes, Madam, frequently at Paris. "He was laſt winter perpetually driving "from one public place to another, as if "ambitious of rendering himſelf more con-"ſpicuouſly ridiculous."

"Your Lordſhip is extremely ſevere," ſaid I.

"Oh

"Oh Madam, my ſentiments are of "little conſequence; he is a man of too "much gallantry not to eſteem the admi- "ration of your ſex as a more than ade- "quate compenſation for the contempt of "mine."

I was diſpleaſed with this anſwer, and with the tone of voice in which it was pronounced.—However, I made no reply.

As I ſlept till after breakfaſt to-day, I have not ſeen him. He is gone to the Dean's, and I ſuppoſe we ſhall not meet until dinner. Indeed I am uneaſy at the ſingularity of his conduct. Perhaps you are acquainted with ſome circumſtances, which may throw a light on it; I ſhould be unwilling to aſcribe it to a caprice of temper I deteſt.

You will be diſpleaſed I have ſaid ſo little of Wentworth:—the young man, I think is extremely well qualified to ſpeak for himſelf. Beſides, he told me he wrote to you yeſterday.

Adieu.

DELIA BLOOMFIELD.

LET-

LETTER XLIII.

Lord Archer to *Lord Revell.*

I Returned yeſterday to Bloomfield, but my ſatisfaction was damped by finding no one at home to receive me. As my return was unexpected, they were gone to ſpend a day at a gentleman's ſeat about four miles diſtant. I ſent to Wentworth, who, the ſervants informed me, was at home. He came to me early in the evening and prevailed on me to dreſs and go with him to Sir Humphry Mordaunt's. It was late when we got thither. There was a great deal of company and we found the young people dancing. The ſuperior eaſe and elegance of her motion diſtinguiſhed Delia from every other female; but I was ſurpriſed to recogniſe in her partner Manſell, whom you muſt remember at Paris laſt winter—the ſame that poor Montague

tague uſed to ſtyle the *flower of puppyhood.* I have been often aſtoniſhed at the partiality which even women of underſtanding ſometimes entertain for coxcombs. I was diſpleaſed to perceive in Delia's manners a tincture of this unaccountable prejudice. Her attention was ſo divided between him and a companion of his, a man of a moſt ſingular character, that we ſcarcely exchanged a ſyllable all the evening, and as we returned home at night ſhe appeared offended when I ſpoke my opinion of him.—I am conſcious my taſte is too refined—we have no reaſon to be diſpleaſed with our friends, when they do not entirely anſwer the romantic expectations we are too apt to conceive of them. We may wiſh them perfect — but to be diſpleaſed when we find them otherwiſe, is prepoſterous. I muſt correct this ridiculous temper.—On recollection, I am convinced I was much more blameable than Delia Bloomfield.—I am called to dinner.

" If

" If to her ſhare ſome female errors fall,
" Look on her face and you'll forget them all!"

Surely theſe lines were never better applied. Yet how few, how very few are Delia's errors—how numberleſs her virtues and perfections!

At dinner her air was reſerved, and the manner in which ſhe replied to the converſation I addreſſed to her, cold and conſtrained.—Soon after dinner ſhe left the room, and the baronet fell aſleep in his elbow-chair. Not well knowing how to diſpoſe of myſelf I ſtrolled into the garden. Diſagreeable reflections will ſometimes obtrude themſelves. I felt myſelf in a humour to indulge them. I ſat down by the ſide of the caſcade on a ruſtic ſeat ſhaded with willows. I ſat near an hour, loſt in thought when a little ruſtling amongſt the boughs awoke me from my reverie. I turned and ſaw Delia ſtanding by my ſide, earneſtly contemplating my countenance.

" Will your Lordſhip," ſaid ſhe with a ſoft and gentle air, " forgive my intru-
" ſion?"

" Delia

"Delia Bloomfield," ſaid I, "once "honoured me with the name of brother. "Why is that affectionate appellation ex- "changed for the cold reſpectful title of "your Lordſhip?"

"A queſtion of this nature," replied ſhe, "might come with more propriety "from me. When I went to you laſt "night to expreſs my ſatisfaction at your "return, why was I addreſſed by the epi- "thets of Madam and Miſs Bloomfield?" (Revell, I almoſt bluſhed at the queſtion) —"I ſhould be unwilling," continued ſhe in the ſofteſt tone, "to be obliged to cen- "ſure my brother for caprice, and would "rather hope that an alteration ſo evident "proceeded from ſome fancied fault on "my ſide."

She ſeated herſelf beſide me as ſhe ſpoke; I was viſibly confuſed and totally at a loſs for a reply.

"However," continued ſhe, "convince "me no diſagreeable incident has occa- "ſioned this change of temper and I ſhall "be ſatisfied. I hope I am not imperti-

"nently

" nently curious;—but it is only the " greateſt inſenſibility that can prevent us " from being intereſted in the anxieties of " thoſe we love."

Her countenance was animated with the ſweeteſt expreſſion whilſt ſhe ſpoke;—her voice always ſoft and muſical, was more than uſually harmonious.

" How kind," ſaid I, taking her hand, " is this unmerited condeſcenſion. Believe " me, no earthly bleſſing is more dear to " me than your friendſhip—nor any mis- " fortune equal to that of being deemed " unworthy to poſſeſs it. I had," continued I, looking confoundedly ſilly,— " a ſlight uneaſineſs, the cauſe of which I " cannot at preſent reveal, which, together " with the fatigue of riding poſt, might " have occaſioned an alteration I am not " conſcious of;—but aſſure me of your " forgiveneſs and let me be again your " brother."

" From the commencement of our ac- " quaintance," replied ſhe, " I have con- " ſidered you in that light. With plea-

" ſure

" ſure I reſtore to you the endearing name " of brother, a name ſo ſuitable to my " feelings."

She gave me her hand in token of reconciliation. I preſſed it to my lips. " But in the character of a brother," ſaid I, " may I not demand a more tender " ſalute."

She ſmiled and bent her face towards me with that unaffected grace, which at once encourages timidity, and repreſſes preſumption. I imprinted a fraternal kiſs on her cheek.

She aroſe, I followed her;—ſhe put her arm through mine as we walked—and talked over the incidents of the preceding evening with a vivacity that enchanted me. —She diſpiſes Manſell as much as I do —

" I amuſe myſelf with a coxcomb," ſaid ſhe, " when he comes in my way, as I " ſhould do with a ſquirrel or a monkey; " I conſider them but as a different ſpe- " cies of the ſame genus."

Lord Hermont has been here; but Sir Richard, Delia and I were from home. I know

know not with what intention this viſit was made—he is to come again, I hear.

To what purpoſe is my loitering away my hours in this ſolitude. Would to heaven it were over.—I dread to reveal my reſolution to Lady Harriot — a reſolution which will ſo ſeverely afflict her.—Perhaps my lovely ſiſter will entreat me with tears to relinquiſh it.—With tears! —but no—ere that time, her heart engroſſed, perhaps by a warmer affection than friendſhip—but no more of theſe conjectures.—

Adieu.

ARCHER.

LETTER XLIV.

Delia Bloomfield to *Henrietta Willmore.*

I REJOICE that you are at length come to an explanation with the Duke—his conduct on this occaſion was conſiſtent with itſelf—it was generous and manly. I begin to

to repent your rejection of him—After all, it was extremely ſilly to prefer a ruſty caſſock to a ducal coronet.—Never again attempt to ſhew your face in the *beau monde*—the faſhionable owls will hoot you forever from their ſociety.

I have been ſo occupied ſince I laſt wrote, with viſits from our neighbouring gentry, and flirtations with Lord Manſell, that I have had ſcarce a moment's leiſure. Seymor and he are both from England, (a ſoil fruitful in oddities). Manſell is at preſent Seymor's gueſt, who has taken the ſweet little villa near the Glen of the Downs (which belongs to Mr. Selwin) for this ſeaſon. I like that creature more than I can expreſs, and notwithſtanding all his Lordſhip's gallantries, have a much ſtronger tendreſs for his friend.

Lord Archer is at preſent in a ſtate of mortification. This day ſome of our neighbouring foxhunters honoured us with their company at dinner; and as my grandfather has been confined to his chamber theſe two days with the gout in his toe, the diſagreeable

able office of entertaining our ſavage gueſts devolved on Archer.

As I have a natural antipathy to this race of animals, I retired as ſoon as the cloth was removed; and left them to the unenvied poſſeſſion of their clamorous jollity.

Seymor and Manſell!—heavens what a delightful interruption!—I ſee Manſell in the garden, Seymor has walked on with Aunt Sophy—What a charming flutter I am in—If he ſhould avow the flame that conſumes him, could I cruelly extinguiſh it with diſdain?—If he ſhould throw himſelf at my feet in one of thoſe enchanting bowers, thoſe ſweet receſſes that ſeem formed for love;—if he ſhould raiſe his ſupplicating eyes, (I forgot to tell you, they ſquint a little, which by giving a charming diverſity to his glances, renders them irreſiſtible)—is it in a woman to ſuſtain the united force of attractions ſo bewitching!

" But

" But ah! how raptured thought bewildered ſtrays!
" Loſt in deluſive fancy's flowery maze!"

Adieu! — I fly to realize thoſe ideal tranſports!—

Twelve at Night.

The delightful creature profeſſed himſelf enchanted with pleaſure at our interview, and in his uſual ſtyle complimented me to the moſt violent degree; but that Argus, Seymor—upon my life I believe he too is in love with me—he keeps forever at my ſide, and teizes me with converſation importunate, becauſe it prevents me from attending to the more intereſting gallantries of my enamoured peer. This Hyrcanian bear interrupted his ſoft rhapſodies with the moſt ſavage rudeneſs, and deſired him not to worry us with his nonſenſe.

" Come," continued he, " let us re-
" turn to the houſe; I want to hear you
" play; any noiſe would be more toler-
" able than that with which my Lord here
" is pleaſed to beſet us."

" His

"His Lordſhip's converſation," replied I, "may be inſipid to you, to whom "it is no variety;—but can you ſuppoſe "me to have ſo little taſte as not to be in-"chanted with it?"

"Have I not already told you," returned he, "that he poſſeſſes not the fa-"culty of diſtinguiſhing the ſerious from "the ironical:—pay him a few more com-"pliments in the ſame ſtyle, and he will "ſwear you are dying for love of him."

"Fie, Seymor," cried his Lordſhip, "how can you be ſo prepoſterous! But "Delia Bloomfield is too well acquainted "with my modeſty to believe me capable "of ſuch monſtrous vanity. Though," continued he in a low voice, ſqueezing my hand moſt emphatically as he led me up the ſteps, "I would ſacrifice the univerſe "to be convinced of the truth of a ſup-"poſition ſo charming."

I now began to perceive that the caſt in his eyes was not ſo propitious to the language of lovers as I had imagined—for a very tender and languiſhing glance which

was undoubtedly intended for me, from the irregular diſpoſition of his optics, appeared to be directly levelled at Aunt Sophy, and excited a violent tranſport of jealouſy in my breaſt. But the inconveniences are all on my ſide, whilſt he ogles me inceſſantly with one eye—how uſeful will it be to him to be able to reſerve the other to watch the motions of his rivals!

I played and ſung till tea. It was paſt eight before the ſavages retired to their dens. When Archer joined us methought he looked rather gloomy, and not much delighted with the preſence of our gueſts. Juſt then a ſervant brought me a letter from Lady Harriot, with my picture, which you know I had got drawn when in town and ſent to be ſet in a ring for my grandſire. Whilſt I was reading the letter, my hair, which was looſely plaited, fell down, and Lord Manſell with an officiouſneſs which I could not prevent, inſiſted on the honour of adjuſting it. Archer ſeemed enraged at his forwardneſs and his eyes ſeemed to reproach my allowing it.

" It

"It is a thouſand pities you are not a "hair-dreſſer," ſaid Seymor.

"Why really if I were to deſcend to an "inferior ſtation, if I can call that ſtation "inferior which ſupplies inceſſant oppor- "tunities of being employed in the ſer- "vice of *le beau ſexe*, I think I ſhould be "tempted to embrace it. Upon my ho- "nour, I have often envied the happy "raſcals."

"What occaſion for envy, my Lord," ſaid Archer, dryly, "when it is at any "time in your power to ſuperſede the "whole fraternity. The ſcience is not "difficult to acquire, and I dare promiſe "the ladies will be ambitious of patroni- "zing a frizeur ſo admirably adapted to "the employment as your Lordſhip," bowing as he concluded with a ſarcaſtic air.

Manſell changed colour and ſeemed at a loſs how to take this raillery, which was undoubtedly too pointed and ſevere. Seymor looked grave and diſpleaſed. Willing to change a converſation which began

to alarm me, I gave the ring to Seymor and aſked his opinion of it.

" They have not flattered you much," ſaid he.

" Flattered her," cried Manſell, " that " would be impoſſible. — Here are her " features, indeed, but where their cap- " tivating graces! Here are the lips—but " where their faſcinating ſmiles—the eyes, " but where the killing glances? And yet " defective as it is, what would I not " give for this little repreſentative!"

" You pay Delia Bloomfield a ſorry " compliment," ſaid Seymor, " by in- " ſinuating you require her portrait to re- " mind you of her charms."

" Heaven knows I do not," replied he, " her charms are but too deeply engraven " on the heart ſhe has enſlaved forever."

" Forever!—Oh, my Lord, you pro- " miſe too much; hitherto you have been " a general admirer; can I then without " the moſt conſummate vanity flatter my- " ſelf that any charm I poſſeſs can fix a " heart ſo volatile as your Lordſhip's?"

" O Ma-

"O Madam," cried Archer, with the moſt ſatyrical air, "even mercury may "be fixed by *gold.*"

This obſervation was too pointed to paſs unnoticed.—Manſell reddened extremely and looked violently diſpleaſed.

"This is the ſecond time," ſaid he, "that—but really my Lord, this is too "much—you muſt give me leave to ſay "this inſinuation is extremely—I ſhould "be glad to know how I am to inter-"pret it?"

"As your Lordſhip pleaſes," returned Archer, with the ſame provoking coldneſs, "that is to me a matter of total indif-"ference."

"Yes," replied Manſell, ſtill more enraged,—"the implication is too plain. I "ſee—but I deſpiſe it—my eſtate, give "me leave to tell you—but my rent-roll "will ſpeak for itſelf."

"If it ſpeaks no more intelligibly for "itſelf than your Lordſhip does for it," ſaid Archer with a ſarcaſtic ſmile, "it is

" not likely to throw much light upon " the cauſe."

" This treatment is not to be borne!" cried Manſell, " perhaps I might with " juſtice retort the inſinuation you have " thrown out.—Perhaps if your rent-roll " (if you have a rent-roll) were examined."

" O my Lord," interrupted Archer, " you forget our caſes are by no means " ſimilar—if I pretended to the Lady, " your retort might be perfectly juſt."

" If then, you diſavow any preten- " ſions," replied his angry antagoniſt, " by what title do you preſume to in- " terfere?"

" I meant not to interfere in the ſenſe " you inſinuate," replied Archer, " the " Lady is miſtreſs of her own choice; and " if I could ſuſpect your Lordſhip to be " the object of it, believe me, I ſhould " never even give my opinion, or oppoſe " my judgment againſt that of a perſon " whoſe unworthy election evinced her ſo " ſtrangely infatuated."

" It

"It is enough," ſaid Manſell, half choaked with rage—"it is enough—you "endeavour to injure me in the tendereſt "point—but I ſee—I ſee that envy is the "ſource of this unmerited malice and ill-"treatment.—But for the ſtains my ho-"nour has received."

"Envy!" interrupted Archer, "envy "is incompatible with contempt" (he viewed him at the ſame time with a cold and ſupercilious air), "but for the ſtains "your honour has received, I have no "objection to endeavouring to obliterate "them by any mode your ſagacity may "point out.—But this is no time or "place."

"True," replied Manſell, "this is no "time or place; but—" and he regarded him with an angry and threatning aſpect.

"So, Delia Bloomfield," cried Seymor, who had appeared extremely uneaſy during this conteſt, but now reſumed his uſual drollery—"I find you are in a fair "way of being rid of both your ſwains.—"When their aſſiduities become impor-

" tunate you have nothing to do but to
" play off thoſe turbulent ſpirits againſt
" each other, and thus ſpare yourſelf the
" trouble of forcing them to hang or
" drown themſelves by your diſdain.—
" Thoſe *ſtains of honour* as they are called,
" are only to be obliterated by blood.
" Thus, one will find an *honourable* grave,
" and honour will probably reward its ſur-
" viving votary with a halter. If the
" latter fate ſhould be your's, my dear
" Manſell, I promiſe myſelf great ſatis-
" faction in compoſing your laſt ſpeech.
" Of what church will you die an un-
" worthy member?—But I forgot—you
" fine gentlemen are generally Athieſts by
" profeſſion. Indeed, ſince you are ſo
" humble as to rank yourſelves on a level
" with the *brutes that periſh*; and that your
" exiſtence is frequently an oppreſſive
" weight to yourſelves, without being of
" of the leaſt conſequence to ſociety, it
" were truly tyrannical to prevent you
" from diſpoſing of the burden in the
" manner moſt convenient to you. Beſides,

" your

" your ſo readily ſtaking your lives on " every frivolous occaſion, evinces a mo- " deſt conſciouſneſs of your own inſigni- " gance, which in my opinion, entitles " you to great commendation."

" This raillery is extremely *mal-a-pro-* " *pos*," replied Manſell, " you know I " am no Atheiſt."

" What are you then?" returned Sey- mor, " you laugh at the abſurdity of the " ſavages who dedicate their Pagodas to " the infernal powers, whilſt, with a more " ſurprizing infatuation, you ſacrifice the " rights of ſociety, your own exiſtence, " nay, your eternal happineſs — every " worthy motive—every ſacred obligation " —to that phantom of falſe and ſavage " honour whoſe worſhip is at preſent ſo " prevalent; whoſe temples, like thoſe of " the Indian divinities, are ſtrewed with " mangled carcaſes, and whoſe ſtill more " frantic votaries glut their deteſtable idol " with libations of human blood! An " eternal barrier muſt ſeparate the angels " of light from the demons of revenge:

" would it not be more wiſe, then, in the " latter to avail themſelves of the ſhort " time they generally remain in this upper " ſphere, and by embracing the religion " of the poor Indians, endeavour to de- " precate the malice, and conciliate the " eſteem, of their future hoſt and ſove- " reign--the Devil!"

He ſtopped:—their Lordſhips looked confounded, yet ſullen; each conſcious of his error, yet unwilling to avow it. But I cannot expreſs what I ſuffered from the moment the contention became ſerious; and Seymor's harangue excited the moſt terrifying ideas. I trembled ſo violently, that I was obliged to lean againſt the window for ſupport, though the hopes of being able to reconcile them in ſome meaſore recruited my ſpirits. Lord Archer, who ſtood at another window, turned towards the door, as if going to withdraw. As he paſſed cloſe by me, I caught hold of his arm.

" You muſt not go, my Lord," ſaid I.

" Excuſe

"Excuſe me," ſaid he, with a determined air, gently diſengaging himſelf from me at the ſame time, "I *muſt* go."

He went to the door and my ſpirits ſuddenly deſerting me, I ſunk into a chair and burſt into tears.

Archer flew back to me.

"My Delia in tears," cried he, tenderly taking my hand, "and I the unworthy cauſe of her diſtreſs! My Lord," continued he, turning with an air of dignity to Manſell, who had thrown himſelf on his knees beſide me, "when conſcious of an error, I diſdain not to repair it. I have inſulted you without provocation, and I aſk your forgiveneſs—This conceſſion would be ſufficient, though the offence had been greater."

"O amply ſufficient," replied Manſell, "I too have been wrong, and we will, if you pleaſe, exchange forgiveneſs,"—then turning to me, "lovelieſt of women refrain theſe precious tears—What have you now to fear? I ſwear by every thing moſt dear to me, by your charming ſelf

" I ſwear, that though the fire of my re-
" ſentment burned fierce as the flames of
" Ætna, one drop from theſe enchanting
" eyes would extinguiſh it forever! See—
" am I not ſafe? Yes, deareſt creature, I
" will preſerve my life—a life which your
" tender ſolicitude has taught me to value!"

Thus did he run on in an half whiſper, whilſt Archer on the other ſide leaned over me in ſilent tenderneſs, with an air how different! Yet ſtill I wept, for the ſpirits when violently agitated do not ſuddenly ſubſide.

" You muſt not entirely engroſs my
" amiable friend," ſaid Seymor; he took my hand, and leading me to the window, opened it to give me air. Manſell followed and placed himſelf at the other ſide of me; but Archer ſtood aloof. " You have
" triumphed," ſaid Seymor; " what I
" vainly attempted by reaſonable remon-
" ſtrances, you have effected without a
" ſingle word.—But ſuch is the influence
" of your ſex; what pity that it is not al-
" ways

" ways exerted as at preſent on the ſide of " virtue."

" No," replied I, ſmiling, " the vic- " tory is yours.—You convinced them of " their error and my weakneſs only ſup- " plied them with a plauſible pretence for " acknowledging it."

" You are miſtaken, Madam," whiſ- pered Manſell, " if you imagine I ſacrifi- " ced my vengeance to any motive but the " deſire of obliging you, and the mortal " inquietude with which your affliction in- " ſpired me!"

" I acknowledge, Sir," ſaid Archer, ad- dreſſing Seymor; " I acknowledge my " ſiſter's conjecture is right. The juſt, yet " ludicrous light in which you placed the " faſhionable vice of duelling, made a " ſtrong impreſſion on my mind, which a " falſe pride prevented my avowing at the " inſtant. If I had been ſo fortunate as to " poſſeſs a monitor—a friend, like you, " how many faults ſhould I have avoided " —how often eſcaped the painful con-

" ſciouſneſs

" ſciouſneſs of error, which I feel ſo " ſtrongly at this inſtant."

" I ſhall think myſelf equally honoured " and gratified by your friendſhip," ſaid Seymor, eagerly graſping his hand; " you " are an excellent young man, and merit " the happineſs that awaits you."

What could Seymor mean, Henrietta? What happineſs awaits Lord Archer?— He too looked extremely ſurprized.

Indeed I wonder not at the warmth of Seymor's approbation; never before did Archer appear in a light ſo amiable. With what true greatneſs of mind did he acquit himſelf in circumſtances that might have been productive of ſo much diſturbance. Surely trifling faults, like the dark ſhades of a picture, ſometimes contribute to the beauty of a character; at leaſt they give a ſcope to the exerciſe of thoſe lovely graces, Humility and Candour.

Archer and Seymor engaged in converſation, and Manſell ſtood by me at the window.

" Never,

"Never, my dear Delia Bloomfield," whiſpered he; "never can I forget your "tender anxiety on my account. You "have obliged a man who is not ungrate-"ful, and the diſcovery I have this even-"ing made."

"This evening!" Interrupted I with ſurprize, "what diſcovery? I know of "none."

"I would not for worlds," replied he in the ſame low voice, "diſtreſs your charm-"ing delicacy; but I think I have diſ-"covered—That is, I hope I can perceive "you do not abſolutely deteſt your happy "Manſell."

"Indeed, my Lord," returned I, really at a loſs for the meaning of this ſtrange ſpeech, "if to be aſſured I never deteſted "you in my life can contribute to your "felicity."

"Kind angel!" cried he, catching my hands to his lips in a tranſport, "how I "adore this condeſcenſion!"

It was growing duſkiſh — but I ſaw Archer, who ſeemed to attend more to us than

" ſciouſneſs of error, which I feel ſo " ſtrongly at this inſtant."

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It was growing duſkiſh — but I ſaw Archer, who ſeemed to attend more to us than

than to Seymor, fix his eyes upon us.—I withdrew my hand from Manſell—" I ſee " no room for theſe raptures," ſaid I, riſing; " certainly, my Lord, you muſt " miſunderſtand."

" No, loveliеſt of women," cried he, in a voice loud enough to be heard, " I " underſtand enough to render me the moſt " bleſt of mankind!"

Archer abſolutely ſtarted with ſurprize, and appeared thunderſtruck; I was highly provoked at Manſell's impertinence and abſurdity, but knew not what anſwer to make. Seymor was relating ſome little incident that occurred on his travels and gave us an opportunity of continuing ſilent until Aunt Sophy came to us.

" I believe it is time to be gone," ſaid Seymor; " you ſee it is juſt dark."

" Surely," cried Aunt Sophy, " you " won't be ſo bewitched as to venture your " necks in that high Phaeton in the dark; " it will be moonlight in half an hour " and ſupper will be ready immediately."

" They

They readily aſſented to the propoſal, though I confeſs I heartily wiſhed them gone.

The evening had been extremely diſagreeable, and I was become quite diſguſted with Manſell's abſurdity. I ſat down to the harpſichord merely to avoid his troubleſome aſſiduities—but in vain; he leaned over the back of my chair and abſolutely ſtunned me with his rhapſodies. I was ſoon relieved by being ſummoned to ſupper; he ſeated himſelf next me at table; but I had forgot my handkerchief in the drawing-room and made it a pretence for haſtily leaving the room; I returned in an inſtant and ſeated myſelf between Seymor and Archer.

"The poor Delia!" cried Seymor to Manſell, who appeared ſurprized at my manœuvre — "you have completely fa-
"tigued her; did I not tell you ſhe had
"too good an underſtanding to admire
"ſuch a fop as you?"

"Oh," replied Manſell, with a ſelf-ſufficient air, "you have great reaſon to

"pique

" pique yourſelf on your penetration." Looking at me ſignificantly as he ſpoke.

When they aroſe to depart, Lord Manſell, taking my hand, told me he would have the pleaſure of waiting on me next morning; by no means delighted with the promiſed honour, I only courtſeyed.

When they were gone, I went to my grandfather and ſat chatting with him till near twelve; then recollecting a book I had left in the drawing-room, I ran down for it, and was ſurprized to ſee Lord Archer aſcending the ſteps from the garden.

" You have been out," ſaid I.

" Yes," replied he, " it is a moſt en-
" chanting night."

I went to the door to look out.—" Can
" my ſiſter forgive the uneaſineſs I this
" night occaſioned her?" ſaid he, " In-
" deed, when I reflect on it, I am almoſt
" aſhamed to appear in her preſence."

" Mention it no more, my dear bro-
" ther," replied I; " 'tis a pity ſo much
" diſturbance

" disturbance should have arisen from a " cause so insignificant as Lord Mansell."

" So insignificant as Lord Mansell!" repeated he.

" What," returned I, " do you think " it amazing that I should have that " opinion of his Lordship!"

" This morning," replied he, " I " should have thought it amazing if you " entertained any other—but the words I " this night overheard—and yet, as I am " convinced that you cannot in the end " mean to accept Lord Mansell's addresses; " that in the beginning you should en- " courage them, is totally inconsistent with " my idea of your character."

" I encourage Lord Mansell's addresses! " I should as willingly encourage the ad- " dresses of a monkey! Nay, if I were " doomed to be chained to either little " monster, I doubt not that pug might " prove the most tolerable yoke-fellow.

" What then could he mean, my dear " Delia?"

" To

"To be impertinent, I believe; for "-coxcomb as he is, I can ſcarcely ſuppoſe "that he could interpret the words which "paſſed this evening, into a confeſſion of "partiality to him. Indeed, if you, my "dear brother, had been unconcerned in "the contention, I ſhould have been "greatly diverted with his choler."

"I was wrong," replied he, "extremely "wrong; but the fumes of the wine, of "which, in compliance with the humour "of my company, I was obliged to drink "much more than I am accuſtomed to, "occaſioned a violent head-ach, and ren-"dered me captious and ill-tempered— "however, if you could be conſcious of "the pain I have ſuffered on a retroſpection "of the tranſactions of this evening, you "would think my fault more than ſuffici-"ently expiated by my penitence."

Is he not very amiable, my Henrietta? If Manſell had any policy, or rather if he was not blinded by his inordinate ſelf-conceit, he would wait the opportunities which Archer's frequent abſences ſupply,

of

of rendering himſelf agreeable to me; for really the compariſons I cannot forbear continually making ſo much in favour of the latter, are by no means auſpicious to his ſuit.—It ſtrikes two—

Adieu—Adieu!

DELIA BLOOMFIELD.

LETTER XLV.

Delia Bloomfield to *Henrietta Willmore.*

I HAD ſcarcely done breakfaſt this morning, when this indefatigable Manſell was with me. Seymor came with him.

"I have been wiſhing you at the Antipodes, Delia Bloomfield," ſaid he, with his uſual abruptneſs; "his Lordſhip has been up ſince ſix making prepara-

"tions

" tions for this visit; and he and his train
" made such a confounded noise, that I
" found it impossible to rest; so lay very
" quietly, indulging my meditations, when
" on a sudden, I was roused by the most
" dreadful yells, interspersed with menaces
" and execrations. I instantly concluded
" they were possessed by a legion of de-
" vils, and on getting up to exercise my
" demoniacs with a good oak saplin, I had
" provided for the purpose, I found it was
" only *Mousieur du Fripon* (I think they
" call him) my Lord's valet de chambre,
" who had burned off a small piece of his
" Lordship's ear."

" A small piece!" interrupted Mansell,
" no really;—it was a very formidable
" wound; and I doubt if you would have
" borne it with so much philosophy,
" though I acknowledge there was a *tin-*
" *tamaue.* Never was any thing so pro-
" voking! Only see, Delia Bloomfield,
" what a monstrous black patch I am
" obliged to disfigure it with. Does it not
" make me look quite horrid?"

" Why

"Why really, my Lord, it is aſtoniſh-
"ing that a trifle can deform you ſo ex-
"tremely—but it gives ſomething very
"tremendous to the caſt of your coun-
"tenance."

"I proteſt ſo it does," pulling out a pocket-glaſs—"Oh *c'eſt extrememement hor-*
"*rible!* I feel a ſtrong inclination to pull
"it off."

"Aye do ſo," cried Seymor, "and
"ten to one a mortification will be the
"conſequence, and then amputation will
"rid you of it at once. What ſay you,
"Delia Bloomfield, do you adviſe him to
"rend the plaiſter from the bleeding
"wound?"

"It may be a fine jeſt to you, Mr.
"Seymor," replied he, in a pet; "but
"I think it diſplays the utmoſt inhuma-
"nity and barbariſm to ſport with the
"misfortunes of our fellow-creatures."

"And do you term that little ſcar a
"misfortune?" cried the Dean, who, from the moment Manſell had entered, ſat viewing

ing him with ſide-long glances of ſilent contempt.

"Undoubtedly, I term every thing a "misfortune which renders me unhappy."

"Unhappy!" repeated the Dean with indignation, "I ſhould ſcourge a whim- "pering boy of ſeven years old for ſuch a "declaration. Why do I exiſt in this de- "generate age!—A Spartan matron would "have bluſhed to diſtinguiſh the death of "a darling ſon by the appellation of a "misfortune!"

"The Spartan ladies," replied Man- ſell, "would have had misfortunes enough "of that nature to exerciſe their magna- "nimity, if it had been the faſhion to "hang for thievery in thoſe days—and a "thouſand pities it was not! It would "have been a good office to ſociety to rid "it of ſuch inſenſible wretches."

"Thievery!" exclaimed the Dean, "what a ſhameful contraction of ideas! "It is true, their ſage legiſlator for pur- "poſes evidently calculated—"

"Oh!"

"Oh!" interrupted Manſell, "I doubt "not but ſuch practices may be perfectly "conſiſtent with your principles, but you "will no more perſuade my judgment to "approve their morals, than you will "teach my palate to reliſh their black "broth."

"Young man," replied the Dean, with affected compoſure, "I expect not to do "either. Neither your judgment, warped "by the pernicious influence, and cor-"rupted by the falſe refinements of mo-"dern manners; nor your palate, vitiated "by indulgence, and depraved by ſen-"ſuality, is capable of admiring the dig-"nity of antient virtue, nor the ſimplicity "of antient regimen."

"If there be any ſuch virtue and dig-"nity in thievery," replied Manſell, "it "is a ſhocking injuſtice in our legiſlature "to conſign ſuch numbers of robbers and "pickpockets to the gallows and planta-"tions every ſeſſions. I find it is as defi-"cient as myſelf in a perception of this "great and elevated virtue."

The Dean caſt at him a diſdainful ſmile —then turned away his eyes without deigning to retort.

"I remember reading at ſchool," reſumed Manſell, "a ridiculous ſtory of a "Spartan boy who ſuffered a fox, which "he had ſtolen, to gnaw his vitals, rather "than complain of the anguiſh which "would have expoſed the fact. The "pedagogues uſed to extol it as a won-"derful inſtance of magnanimity; but, "for my part, I thought it the moſt atro-"cious piece of folly and wickedneſs I "ever heard of. But this is the heroic "virtue of the antients, whilſt a poor "devil of a modern is hanged for ſtealing "a ſheep to ſupport his ſtarving family. "But their other cuſtoms were ſtill more "obſcene and abominable. A pretty ſort "of law-giver this ſame Lycurgus! to "enjoin young women to go naked, and "parents to ſtand by whilſt their children "were ſcourged to death! but this was "by way of rendering them intrepid in "the field of battle; as if men were created

"to

" to no purpoſe but that of butchering
" each other. A fine ſyſtem of morals
" you recommend to our imitation! I
" ſuppoſe you would have had me, in
" emulation of this ſublime equanimity,
" ſit patiently until de Fripon had done
" burning off my ear this morning."

" And it had been a notable act of juſ-
" tice," muttered the Dean.

" But," continued his Lordſhip, " I
" do not aſpire to be more than man. If
" nature has made me ſuſceptible of pain,
" I ſee no reaſon why I ſhould diſavow
" my feelings; and I am not aſhamed to
" acknowledge that I think a ſevere burn
" one of the ſoreſt evils under the ſun."

" Then you are no admirer of paſſive
" fortitude," ſaid Sir Richard.

" No, really; I feel no ambition to
" emulate the ſavage ferocity of the wild
" Indian. This paſſive fortitude, if it
" deſerves the name of a virtue, is at beſt
" but a barbaric one, and is always moſt
" prevalent in uncultivated minds."

"You invalidate your own aſſertion," cried the Dean, no longer able to repreſs his boiling choler; "for by that rule no "creature on earth ſhould poſſeſs it in ſo "high a degree as yourſelf! But come, "Sir Richard, why do we waſte this beau-"tiful morning in attending to ſuch mon-"ſtrous abſurdities! Weak as are the "feeble ſupporters of this frame, they "will at leaſt be able to bear me to ſome "ſpot where my ears may no longer be "aſſailed with the din of ignorance and "folly!"

"Juſte Ciel quelle groſierete!" exclaimed Manſell, the inſtant they were gone, "would to heaven this old ſavage "would confine himſelf to his back ſettle-"ments;—his brutality is abſolutely in-"ſufferable."

"Not half ſo inſufferable as your pert-"neſs," replied Seymor, who had appeared really diſtreſſed for him during his altercation with the Dean; "his character "though ſingular, is reſpectable; his ha-

"bi t

" bit at leaſt ſhould protect him from in-
" ſult."

Manſell bore this rebuke with his uſual patience. Indeed the aſcendancy Seymor has gained over him is wonderful; his Lordſhip appeared to me in a new, but not more engaging light; his good humour, which I have always thought his greateſt perfection, entirely depends on his exceſſive ſelf-complacency, which had been fatally interrupted by the unfortunate black patch with which he had been obliged to diſgrace his beautiful ear; ſo trifling are the incidents on which thoſe lordly creatures ſuffer the compoſure of their noble ſpirits to depend.

I propoſed a walk, and exerciſe and the fineneſs of the morning ſoon reſtored us to our uſual gaiety. I perceived that Manſell ſeemed deſirous to entertain me alone, and as his aſſiduities were now become troubleſome and importunate, I had no inclination to decline a *tête-à-tête* which might give me an opportunity of rectifying the error he had fallen into in reſpect to my

favourable ſentiments of him. Seymor with an archneſs that ſhewed deſign, expreſſed a ſtrong deſire to clamber to the height of a rock almoſt inacceſſible, and engaged Archer to accompany him. Manſell and I ſeated ourſelves at the bottom.

"We will leave thoſe elevated purſuits to ſuch aſpiring geniuſes, my Lord," ſaid I, "and though our humble ſituation may "afford us proſpects leſs extenſive and "diverſified, it will exempt us from the "fatigue and dangers they are likely to "encounter."

"Ah! Madam," returned he, "I can "venture to aſſert the motives which de-"tain me in this humble ſituation, as "you expreſs it, to be infinitely more "aſpiring than any which can animate "their purſuits. Yes, loveliest of your ſex!" continued he, catching my hand and falling on his knees before me, "I have long "languiſhed for this opportunity of re-"vealing the paſſion with which your "charms have enflamed me. But my "eyes, thoſe faithful interpreters of my "heart,

" heart, have already diſcloſed it; and " ſure, if I am not deluded by my pre- " ſumptuous wiſhes, I have read in your's " that the language of my own is not of- " fenſive to you."

" I am ſorry to find, my Lord," replied I, gravely, withdrawing my hand as I ſpoke, " that we are equally novices in " this ſpecies of *ocular intelligence*. From " your eyes I never ſhould have gueſſed " at the information you hint at; and I " muſt aſſure you that mine have been " very unjuſt to the feelings of my heart, " if they ever expreſſed any particular ap- " probation of your Lordſhip."

He looked extremely ſurprized, and ſeemed to heſitate, as if doubtful of the ſenſe of my reply. " You muſt permit " me to tell you, Madam," ſaid he in an angry tone of voice, " that I think this " treatment ſomewhat extraordinary! and " after the encouragement you were laſt " night pleaſed to give to my hopes, thus " by a fatal caprice, to daſh them at once

" with diſdain and cruelty, is more than " my fortitude can enable me to ſuſtain."

" I have often heard," replied I, " that " love inſpires his votaries with eloquence. " Your oration requires but little tranſ- " poſition to render it truly poetical. " How was it?—"

" This fatal caprice and this harſh diſdain,
" Are more than mortal patience can ſuſtain."

" Madam," cried he, " thus to add " inſult to refuſal, is too much!—But " perhaps,"—ſoftening his voice—" per- " haps my Delia only wiſhes to aſſert the " right of a conqueror, and exert her " power over the ſoul ſhe has enſlaved " forever! Yes, my fair ſubduer; drag " me at your chariot wheels! Deign but " to bind him in eternal chains, and your " bleſt captive ſhall no longer repine at " the ſeverity of his fate!"

" Good again, my Lord."

" Deign but to bind him in eternal chains,
" And your bleſt captive ſhall forget his pains!"

" You

"You are pleaſed to be witty, Madam: "or rather to aim at being ſo;—I could "wiſh, however, you would find ſome "more proper ſubject for your ridicule!"

"Indeed, my Lord, that would be im- "poſſible!—for, believe me, there exiſts "not in nature an object more truly lu- "dicrous than a man whoſe intolerable "vanity induces him to fancy that every "woman who treats him with thoſe little "diſtinctions, which politeneſs prompts "and cuſtom authorizes, muſt conſe- "quently be enamoured of his perfections. "As for the paſſion you do me the ho- "nour to profeſs for me, you muſt for- "give me if I doubt its reality. True "love is always accompanied by timidity; "but of this amiable quality, I have per- "ceived no traces in your conduct; on "the reverſe, in reſpect to me it has been "highly preſumptuous and aſſuming."

"Preſumptuous and aſſuming!" re- turned he, with a ſneer, "I acknowledge, "Madam, I cannot conceive how I have "merited thoſe ſevere charges, although I

" had the temerity to aſpire to an union " with a lady, ſo very conſcious of her " own perfections, that I ſuppoſe ſhe ima- " gines no perſon beneath the rank of a " prince of the blood entitled to the poſ- " ſeſſion of them. But the world, per- " haps, will judge otherwiſe, and conceive " that I ſhould have *conferred* rather than " have *received* an honour, had ſuch an " alliance taken place."

Henrietta, could I treat ſuch a coxcomb too ill!

" My Lord," replied I, " you miſun- " derſtand me; I meant not to accuſe you " of preſumption in pretending an union, " where, in point of birth and fortune, the " advantages might probably, have been " equal on both ſides. What diſpleaſed " me in your conduct, was your miſinter- " pretation of my ſentiments; for you " may eaſily imagine it is by no means " pleaſing to a woman, to be ſuſpected of " an attachment to a man for whom ſhe " feels not the ſlighteſt partiality."

" Oh,

"Oh, Madam," returned he, very angrily, "my preſumption has been its "own puniſhment.—But I perceive the "cauſe of my being treated in this un- "worthy manner!—and yet I muſt con- "feſs myſelf at a loſs to conceive theſe "ſuperior advantages, which entitle my "rival to a preference ſo very extraor- "dinary."

"Again you are in an error," replied I, "you have no rival; and I can aſſure "you with ſincerity, that I am at this "moment almoſt alike indifferent to all "mankind."

"This, he ſaid was a moſt unaccount- "able circumſtance, nor could he poſ- "ſibly imagine that his addreſſes could "be rejected, unleſs they interfered with "the pretenſions of ſome more favoured "lover."

"Strange as it may ſeem, my Lord," replied I, "'tis literally true, neverthe- "leſs; I attempt not to apologiſe for my "inſenſibility, or my want of taſte and "diſcernment, call it which you pleaſe,

" but my heart has hitherto been its own " umpire, and its voice can never be in fa- " vour of your Lordſhip."

" Oh, Madam," returned he, extremely piqued, " fear not that I ſhall endeavour " to alter its determination. It is true, I " was deceived;—I expected not to find " the coquetry of our court ladies joined " with the ruſticity of a country girl;— " however, I have bought experience— " very dearly indeed. Would to heaven " I had taken Seymor's advice—I had " then eſcaped my preſent mortification; " he knew you, Madam, much better " than I did."

" True, my Lord," replied I, highly provoked with his impertinence; " and " he knew you alſo, much better than you " did yourſelf, when you fancied you " were capable of inſpiring affection in " any breaſt, poſſeſſed of the ſlighteſt de- " gree of common underſtanding. You " would do well to profit by your dear " bought experience, and by learning to " form a juſt eſtimate of your own merit,

" avoid

" avoid for the future a mortification,
" which your vanity renders ſo very irk-
" ſome to you. But by this time the gen-
" tlemen are on the oppoſite ſide of the
" rock, we had better walk round to meet
" them."

I aroſe—he followed in ſullen ſilence. Seymor and Archer deſcended immediately on my calling and joined us. Poor Manſell's countenance ſufficiently explained the nature and conſequences of our converſation. I walked on before, with Archer, and I could plainly perceive that Manſell, who followed with Seymor at a diſtance, was entertaining his friend with the cataſtrophe of his diſaſtrous paſſion. I, on my part, thought myſelf at liberty to amuſe my companion with our converſation; he was much diverted with it; only he ſeemed to compaſſionate my rejected ſwain more than I thought he merited. Indeed, had he been leſs preſuming and impertinent, the ſeverity with which I treated him would have been wholly unjuſtifiable. We often meet characters in real life, which, if exhibited

in

in a play or novel, we ſhould cenſure as overſtrained and unnatural; and our modern beaux in particular, carry the abſurdity of their conduct to a height which the wildeſt imagination can ſcarcely ſurpaſs. So far from bluſhing to ſee their follies reflected from the ſtage, they ſeem to ſtudy the Foplings and Jeſſamys, with peculiar attention, and return from the theatre, as from a ſchool, where they have made ſome new attainment in the only ſcience adapted to their ſhallow capacities, and added to their invaluable ſtock of polite knowledge, ſome favourite cant, faſhionable ſhrug, or new imported grimace.

On our return, we were met by the Dean and Sir Richard; the Dean appeared quite rejoiced to ſee his adverſary ſo creſt fallen.

As no one ever leaves this hoſpitable manſion for want of an invitation to continue in it, our gueſts were preſſed moſt cordially to ſpend the day; but Manſell poſitively refuſed to comply with our ſolicitations (for I condeſcended to join in them) and hurried away to order his carriage.

"Thou

"Thou little inhuman tyrant," cried Seymor, when he had an opportunity of ſpeaking to me without being overheard, "who that knew not the deceitfulneſs of "thy ſex, could believe that ſuch barba-"rity could lurk beneath that innocent "ſmiling countenance of thine!"

"Leave to your friend," replied I, "the "care of avenging his own wrongs; I "aſſure you he is very adequate to the of-"fice, and has already treated me with the "moſt ſovereign contempt."

"What wonder," returned he, "has "he not been ſcorned, rejected, treated

—"So like a baſe raſcallion,
"That old *Pyg* (what dy'e call him) *malion*,
"Who cut his miſtreſs out of ſtone,
"Had not ſo hard an hearted one!"

"But I prognoſticated before we left "home, that that deviliſh black ſpot on "his diſk portended a ſtorm in his atmoſ-"phere. For, as Shakeſpear obſerves, "there is a tide in the affairs of men—and "one misfortune is frequently the fore-"runner of another."

"You

"You really pay me a great compli-
"ment, in ranking the disappointment of
"his hopes on a level with the calamity of
"the black patch."

"Come, come, you must not be too se-
"vere. That my friend is a coxcomb, I
"cannot deny; but as an extenuation of
"his fault, you must remember, it in a
"great measure originates from a desire to
"render himself acceptable to your sex.
"Is it not then the height of ingratitude
"to censure a foible which proceeds from
"an ambition so laudable?"

"I owe no gratitude," replied I, "to
"a person who entertains so despicable an
"opinion of my sex, as to imagine its ap-
"probation is to be obtained by a pro-
"ficiency in vanity and folly; and if these
"be your sentiments—"

"Hold," interrupted he, "don't mis-
"take me for a lover, and assume your
"disdainful airs.—I was speaking of my
"friend, not of myself—had his opinion
"coincided with mine, I should have had
"no occasion to attempt to dissuade him

"from

" from a declaration which I foreſaw would
" be received with contempt. And yet,
" notwithſtanding the faults and follies
" which obſcure them, he poſſeſſes many
" good qualities."

" Indeed" replied I, " nothing ſo
" much aſtoniſhes me as the friendſhip
" that apparently ſubſiſts between minds
" ſo extremely diſſimilar as yours and his.
" Love, I know, is ſaid to reconcile in-
" conſiſtencies; but in friendſhip I have
" always thought ſimilarity of ſentiment
" to be requiſite."

" I am not certain," returned he, " that
" our attachment merits the title you ho-
" nour it with. I confeſs the ſtrong re-
" gard, which, ſpite of his follies, I feel
" for him, is his portion by inheritance,
" and devolved to him with his other poſ-
" ſeſſions, on the death of his father, who
" was my moſt intimate friend ſometime
" hence; perhaps, we may exchange con-
" fidences, and I may acquaint you with
" the nature of my obligations to the late
" Lord Manſell."

" And

"And how ſoon," ſaid I, "ſhall I be "judged worthy of this honour?"

"That is a point," replied he, "which "my feelings muſt determine; I can only "tell you, it is not at preſent."

"You are really extremely gallant!"

"No, gallantry I never aſpired to, for "it is long, very long, ſince the motives "which incline young men to cultivate "thoſe graces, which render them amiable "in the eyes of your ſex, have ceaſed to "operate on my conduct. When it be-"came a crime to wiſh to charm the only "heart I ever truly valued, I loſt the de-"ſire of pleaſing—the ambition to excel! "—for the fire of youthful emulation was "early extinguiſhed by the gloom of diſ-"appointment."

Henrietta, how ſtrangely flexible is my mind! At the inſtant that my ſpirits appear raiſed to the higheſt pitch of pleaſure, one melancholy note, vibrating from a diſcordant ſtring, untunes the intellectual harmony, and diffuſes over my ſoul a ſhade of dejection, which I vainly endeavour to diſpel.

diſpel. Seymor obſerved my penſiveneſs, he preſſed my hands with an air of gratitude and ſenſibility, but for a time continued ſilent. A little after reſuming his chearfulneſs,

"I am convinced," ſaid he, "that "after his fatal diſappointment, Manſell "will no longer venture to appear in the "country; for he is ſtrongly infected with "that unaccountable prejudice to which "men more ſenſible are frequently ſubject, "and thinks it a great indignity to be re-"jected."

"It is indeed," returned I, "an un-"accountable prejudice, and has often ex-"cited my aſtoniſhment."

"It proceeds from pride," replied he, "the parent of all our weakneſſes and "foibles. A refuſal is conſidered as a "diſgrace that deeply wounds this little "paſſion; which is more fretful than the "porcupine, and erects her quills on the "ſlighteſt ſhadow of contempt or inſult."

"But if your friend is reſolved to aban-"don the country," ſaid I, "I hope you

"will

" will let him depart alone, and not for-
" ſake it at a ſeaſon when it becomes moſt
" delightful?"

" No," replied he, " if he determines
" to leave it, I ſhall accompany him. I
" have the moſt forcible reaſons for doing
" ſo at preſent. Indeed there is nothing
" I ſo ardently wiſh as to ſee him united
" to a worthy and ſenſible woman; one, to
" whom I might reſign the helm, for I am
" really extremely weary of the office of a
" pilot."

" And ſo you wiſh to ſteer your gilded
" barge into the haven of matrimony?—
" But would you revoke the Salique law
" and admit of female government?"

" I would—in the matrimonial, as well
" as in every other ſcheme of government,
" the direction of affairs ought to be com-
" mitted to the perſon whom Providence
" has bleſſed with powers moſt adequate
" to the taſk, whether male or female;—
" the wiſe and prudent will content them-
" ſelves with the *ſubſtance*, and leave to

" the

"the vain and ſilly the *ſhadow* of au-
"thority."

They were again preſſed to ſtay to dinner, but his Lordſhip peremptorily refuſed; and on leaving the houſe ſcarcely vouchſafed me a ſalute as he ſtrutted paſt, with an air of offended dignity. Seymor, however, promiſed to viſit me very ſoon. I feel myſelf ſtrongly intereſted in his fate, and am convinced there has been ſomething peculiar in the occurrences of his life. Every time I converſe with him, diſcovers ſome new and eſtimable quality, and the characters which thus unfold themſelves by degrees, are generally more intereſting and amiable than thoſe which ſtrike us more forcibly on a ſlight acquaintance. Every interview diminiſhes the effect of the one, but encreaſes the power of the other.

Lady Mordaunt, accompanied by her fair gueſts, viſited us this evening. Lady Narciſſa played off her whole artillery at Lord Archer; but whether Lady Harriot, like the mother of Achilles, had dipt his boſom in the petrifying waves of Styx;—

or

or that Minerva protects it with her impenetrable Ægis—I know not;—certain it is, that it repelled the pointed arrows with with the greateſt eaſe.—Lady Catharine too—that fair automaton, whom I never contemplate without recalling to my imagination the idea of Pygmalion's ivory maid, adorned by the partial hand of its creator with the laviſh magnificence of dreſs. In vain may ſome lover (and in theſe days when ſtatutes are ſo much the *ton*, it is not impoſſible but ſhe may find one) in vain he may pray to Venus to animate the lovely lifeleſs form—the Goddeſs will reject his vows and refuſe his offerings; for if I poſſeſs the leaſt ſkill in phyſiognomy, her heart, ſo far from catching the ſacred glow of reciprocal affection, like the ſalamander would emit a chilling coldneſs of power to extinguiſh the pureſt and moſt fervent flame.

"If I had the diſpoſal of her deſtiny," ſaid Seymor, ſpeaking to me of her the other day, "I would make her a queen; "ſhe ſhould be married to king Log—

"and

" and her ſiſter, Lady Narciſſa, ſhould be " the firſt vocal performer in the ſublime " concerts, with which the croaking na- " tion would regale their wooden monarch " on that happy occaſion!"

Lady Mordaunt entertained us with ſeveral anecdotes relative to Manſell; and amongſt others, that he had brought with him from Paris, an Opera girl, to whom his partiality was ſo unbounded, that his friends dreaded the conſequences, and were even apprehenſive leſt he ſhould actually have married her. She added, that this creature by her profuſion, had greatly injured his circumſtances; but that Seymor, on being apprized of his ſituation, had left his country ſeat precipitately and flown to reſcue him from the fangs of the harpy, (whom he with difficulty obliged to relinquiſh her prey, and return to France) and had afterwards projected a tour through Wales and Ireland, for the purpoſe of diverting his friend's chagrin;—how little does he merit an attention ſo generous?

So,

So, my fortune was the bait this ſhark was nibbling at, and perhaps it was already devoted in idea to the laudable purpoſe of recalling his beloved Signora, and ſupporting her in extravagance! If I had been in the ſlighteſt danger, how ſhould I have rejoiced at my eſcape.

Seymor has been to take leave of me. I am angry with myſelf for the concern I felt at the departure of a perſon who is almoſt a ſtranger to me. Lord Archer was abſent when he came, and my Aunt and Grandmother were out airing, ſo that we had a *tête-à-tête*. Our converſation was long and intereſting, but as I have much to write, I have not leiſure to repeat it. He has made me his confidante. On ſomething he addreſſed to me in his uſual blunt way, I expreſſed my ſurprize that a perſon in his ſphere of life—poſſeſſed of the advantages of ſuperior education, and an intercourſe with the moſt elegant company, had contracted

tracted the uncommon roughneſs which diſtinguiſhes his manners. For indeed his own exceſſive eaſe encourages familiarity, and I ſpeak my ſentiments with as much freedom as if we had been acquainted from my infancy.

"You are miſtaken," cried he, "my "roughneſs is not *contracted*—it is natural; "but many circumſtances have concurred "to prevent its being rubbed off in the "buſtle of ſociety.—No matter;—like "the prickles of the hedge-hog, it keeps "the inſects at a diſtance;—if I were be-"ſmeared with honey, the drones would "devour me;—it has its conveniences, "and long habit has rendered it agree-"able—to myſelf, I mean."

"If it were otherwiſe," replied I, "I "ſuppoſe you wild diveſt yourſelf of it."

"Is it then ſo eaſy to divert our affec-"tions from the channel in which nature "has commanded them to flow?—I could "never give my ſuffrage to the ſyſtem of "thoſe philoſophers, who reſemble the hu-"man mind to a ſheet of blank paper—on

" the contrary, it comes into the world im-
" preſſed with indelible characters—cha-
" racters which education may alter, but
" can never obliterate.—Even the brute
" creation partake of this native diſcri-
" mination, and I have often amuſed my-
" ſelf with conſidering the various diſpo-
" ſitions of a litter of whelps, or a neſt of
" young cats, whoſe education could
" ſcarcely be ſuppoſed to give a bias to
" their manners. Whilſt ſome came pur-
" ring to my offered hand as if proud of
" my careſſes, others would retire to the
" utmoſt corner of their den, erect their
" little backs—glare with their eyes, and
" ſpit and growl with the ſavage ferocity
" of the tyger, to which they bear ſo near
" an affinity.—My little ſtory (for at pre-
" ſent I feel myſelf in the humour of tell-
" ing it) will illuſtrate this point. Never
" was this natural diſtinction of characters
" more ſtrongly marked than in the minds
" of my brother, the preſent Lord Sey-
" mor, and my own. Though twins by
" birth, our uncongenial ſouls were as

" diſſimilar

" dissimilar as those of the savage Green-
" landers and the voluptuous Asiatic.
" Like the young grimalkins I just now
" referred to, he was mild and docile, I
" was fierce and irascible. In vain, 'the
' ruling rod—the father's forming care'
" were exercised—the roughness of my
" manners encreased with my encreasing
" strength; and at ten years old so no-
" torious was I become for my brutality,
" that I was distiuguished by my brother
" and the misses, his companions, by the
" titles of *le betile barbare*—and *le petit*
" *sauvage*. Whilst I, on my part reviled
" him with the ignoble epithets of smock-
" face, Miss Molly—and Narcissus. I ac-
" knowledge I richly deserved the con-
" tempt and aversion of the fair; for to
" my eternal shame be it spoken, like Jes-
" samy, the ladies who offended me, were
" no more secure from my resentment than
" the men; and so great was my barbarity,
" that when the little Demoiselles pro-
" voked my ire by any ill-timed pertness,
" I have sent a whole bevy of them scream-

" ing to their mammas with black eyes
" and bloody noſes, and greatly has it
" contributed to my amuſement to meet
" the little fair ones with their pretty faces
" deformed by patches and cataplaſms;
" the monuments of my own proweſs.
" Add to theſe amiable propenſities, a
" paſſion for miſchief that rendered me
" the ſcourge of the domeſtics and the
" horror of the neighbouring tenants; and
" you will not wonder, that my wayward
" diſpoſitions were a real affliction to my
" parents. Puniſhment I bore with a
" proud inſenſibility, and none but gentle
" meaſures made the ſlighteſt impreſſion
" on the native ſtubbornneſs of my mind.
" 'Tis true, I poſſeſſed ſome good qualities
" to compenſate for faults ſo deeply rooted.
" I was friendly—generous, undeſigning
" —deſpiſing artifice and abhorring falſe-
" hood. My father wiſhed to blend the
" tempers of his ſons, and endeavoured to
" engage us in the ſame purſuits and amuſe-
" ments; but our ſouls refuſed to mingle,
" and after long and fruitleſs efforts he
" deter-

" determined to ſend us to a public-
" ſchool.

" I was here in my element, for as I
" poſſeſſed capacity and induſtry, I ſoon
" became a favourite with the maſter, who,
" happily for me, was far from being in-
" fected with the violent partiality for
" birch, incident to gentlemen of his pro-
" feſſion. I ſoon became the Drawcanſir
" of the ſeminary, and I made my ſchool-
" fellows feel but too ſenſibly, the ſupe-
" rior advantages I derived from the na-
" tive robuſtneſs of my frame and conſti-
" tution. The weakeſt, whether right or
" wrong, was ſure of my countenance and
" protection; and as the gentleneſs of my
" brother's temper frequently expoſed him
" to inſult, I always reſented his wrongs
" and fought his combats with the moſt
" determined obſtinacy; though I made
" no ſcruple of beſtowing on my little peer
" in embryo abundance of ſtripes when-
" ever he excited my private reſentment.
" Thus I became renowned for my mar-
" tial atchievements, and indeed my coun-

" ing to their mammas with black eyes
" and bloody noſes, and greatly has it
" contributed to my amuſement to meet
" the little fair ones with their pretty faces
" deformed by patches and cataplaſms;
" the monuments of my own proweſs.
" Add to theſe amiable propenſities, a
" paſſion for miſchief that rendered me
" the ſcourge of the domeſtics and the
" horror of the neighbouring tenants; and
" you will not wonder, that my wayward
" diſpoſitions were a real affliction to my
" parents. Puniſhment I bore with a
" proud inſenſibility, and none but gentle
" meaſures made the ſlighteſt impreſſion
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" Thus I became renowned for my mar-
" tial atchievements, and indeed my coun-

" tenance exhibits at this hour many illuſ-
" luſtrious ſcars, the witneſs of my former
" glory. By the time, however, I had
" attained my ſixteenth year (at which pe-
" riod my brother and I were removed to
" Oxford) the ferocity of my temper was
" conſiderably abated; ſoftened, I ſup-
" poſe, by the charms of ſtudy to which I
" was extremely addicted; but my manners
" continued as uncouth as ever. I be-
" came conſcious of my defects; but this
" ſenſibility rather encreaſed them by ad-
" ding to the roughneſs of my addreſs, an
" awkward baſhfulneſs. The ſociety of
" your ſex poſſeſſed not the leaſt charm for
" me; on the contrary, ſenſible that I ap-
" peared in it to peculiar diſadvantage, I
" ſedulouſly ſhunned it; and in the vaca-
" tions which we always ſpent at home,
" nothing was ſo irkſome to me as the
" parties of pleaſure which were promo-
" ted by our indulgent parents for our
" amuſement. If there was dancing, I al-
" ways took care to keep aloof until the
" company were provided with partners;

" or

" or if I could not avoid taking one, I ac-
" quitted myſelf in a manner ſo clowniſh—
" ſo little to the ſatisfaction of the unfor-
" tunate damſel to whoſe lot I had fallen,
" that ſhe was always as much mortified
" and diſcontented as myſelf, unleſs ſhe
" had malice enough to laugh at and ri-
" dicule me. My brother, whom at ſchool
" and college I had always regarded as
" my inferior, now became the object of
" my envy and emulation. Volatile, airy
" and elegant, I ſaw him admired by the
" men and idolized by the women—and I
" ſecretly repined and ſickened at his tri-
" umphs. I hated to be excelled by him
" in any reſpect, and I even determined
" to rival him in the approbation of the
" fair. Nature had given me a genius for
" thoſe elegant accompliſhments which are
" generally adapted to their taſtes. I had
" a good voice, and as I was paſſionately
" fond of muſic, I had made a tolerable
" proficiency in that charming ſcience. I
" had rather an uncommon talent for
" drawing, and at ſchool, when I had a

" boy for my partner, I was allowed to
" dance better than my brother. Theſe
" qualifications, which loſt no luſtre by
" being viewed through the medium of
" that partiality with which we always
" contemplate our own perfections, would,
" I no longer doubted, infallibly ſecure me
" the approbation I now aſpired to, if I
" could diveſt myſelf of my *mauvaiſe honte:*
" and I even began to aſcribe the unfa-
" vourable reception I had been accuſ-
" tomed to meet from the fair ſex, to the
" negligence and ſimplicity of my dreſs.
" Flattered with this idea, I determined
" to become polite, and doubted not but
" I ſhould find it a very eaſy taſk without
" ever reflecting that the thouſand decen-
" cies which conſtitute politeneſs, are not
" to be aſſumed at pleaſure like an em-
" broidered ſuit. The ſeaſon approached
" when we were again to be ſummoned
" to our father's ſeat, and I began my
" operations before the opening of the
" campaign. I ſuffered my brother's
" French valet to new model my locks,

" which

" which, till then, had flowed in ringlets
" on my ſhoulders. I beſpoke clothes in
" the moſt ſplendid and faſhionable ſtyle.
" I examined my brother's manners, and
" endeavoured to copy the eaſy elegance
" of his addreſs. In fine, I thought my-
" ſelf almoſt perfect in my new part, and
" my heart fondly anticipated my ap-
" proaching triumphs.

" A few days after our arrival at home,
" we were invited to a *fete champetre* at the
" ſeat of a neighbouring nobleman; and
" here I determined to make my trium-
" phal entry into the faſhionable world.
" Early in the morning of the appointed
" day, I commenced the labours of the
" toilet, Herculean taſks to me!—but my
" brother, who was really extremely good-
" natured, aſſiſted me in them.

" My father and mother were amazed
" at my transformation, and not a little
" delighted that their ſnake had caſt his
" ſlough, and aſſumed a new and beautiful
" exuviæ.

" I liſtened in rapture to the congratu-
" lations I received on the occaſion, and
" began to fancy myſelf in reality an
" Adonis—but, alas! my exultation was
" of ſhort duration, and never, were I to
" live to the years of Methuſelah, never
" could I forget the torments of that day.

" We found a brilliant aſſembly. The
" morning was ſpent in ranging through
" the improvements; however, I deter-
" mined not to waſte it in total inactivity,
" and after ſome fruitleſs efforts I fixed on
" a lady who appeared moſt neglected by
" the male part of the company. I en-
" deavoured to enter into converſation,
" and ſhe liſtened to me with a compla-
" cency that encouraged me to proceed;
" but as I was entirely unverſed in every
" ſpecies of faſhionable chat, I was greatly
" at a loſs. The lady, who knew I had
" ſome taſte for muſic, obligingly intro-
" duced this ſubject. I caught at it with
" eagerneſs, and read her a lecture on the
" nature of ſounds, which made her yawn
" heartily. I perceived that I fatigued
" her;

" her;—but this was not the worſt—juſt
" then an unlucky river was to be croſſed
" by ſtones placed at eaſy diſtances. The
" reſt of the company got over with per-
" fect eaſe; but in my eagerneſs to aſſiſt
" her, I puſhed the unfortunate fair one,
" on whom I had faſtened, into the midſt
" of it. Confuſed and alarmed, I leaped
" in after her and bore her out in my arms;
" but on ſetting her on the bank, my ſword
" entangled in her point trimmings, and
" tore them from her gown. This per-
" verſe accident interrupted the mirth of
" the company, and with the extremeſt
" vexation, I overheard the poor victim
" of my aukwardneſs execrating me to her
" female companions.

" Penſive and mortified, I followed the
" company, who now returned to the
" houſe. The lady was ſupplied with dry
" clothes; I wiſhed to apologiſe, but my
" modeſty was invincible and detained me
" at an awful diſtance. At dinner I dipt
" my long lace ruffles, appendages to
" which I was totally unaccuſtomed, in the

" ſauce, and threw a plate of ſoup which
" a ſervant was handing to an ill-fated
" knight, who ſat next me, into his bo-
" ſom. This accident occaſioned new
" confuſion, and to me new diſtreſs and
" perplexity. I doubt if the human mind
" is ſuſceptible of more poignant anguiſh
" than that which proceeds from theſe lu-
" dicrous vexations. Sorrows of an eleva-
" ted nature are accompanied by a dignity
" which mitigates our ſenſe of ſuffering.
" There is a luxury in woe, and a ſecret
" ſelf-complacency in generous ſympathy;
" but where is the ſtern philoſopher that
" can ſupport unmoved the mortifying
" conſciouſneſs of being an object of con-
" tempt and ridicule to thoſe around him!
" I dared not to look up—I wiſhed the
" earth would open to receive me. I caſt
" ſome wiſtful glances at the door, and
" even meditated a flight. The perſon I
" had injured (who was no other than the
" late Lord Manſell, father of your re-
" jected ſwain) compaſſionated my ſuf-
" ferings and good-naturedly endeavoured

" to

" to diſpel them. His lady who ſat on
" the other ſide of me was alſo kindly ſo-
" licitous to divert my chagrin. Her
" ſweetneſs and affability revived my de-
" jected ſpirits, and when the company
" aroſe from the table, ſhe invited me to
" be her companion in a walk, and enter-
" tained me with an eaſe and vivacity
" which excited in my breaſt the warmeſt
" emotions of gratitude, and my ſpirits
" began to riſe. A pavilion was erected
" on the borders of a fine lake, where we
" were ſupplied with refreſhments and en-
" tertained with muſic. As the evening
" was delightful, the company ſat in par-
" ties on the banks of the lake, and little
" ruſtic chairs were diſpoſed for that pur-
" poſe; but the demon who that day pre-
" ſided over my deſtiny, had not yet ſuf-
" ficiently tormented me! Lady Manſell,
" from whoſe protecting wings I ventured
" not to ſtir, declared herſelf fatigued,
" and expreſſed a deſire for a ſeat. Eager
" to oblige my patroneſs, I flew to one
" which was vacant, without perceiving

" that

" that another lady had that inſtant ariſen
" from it and was on the point of reſuming
" it, when, unperceived by her I ſnatched
" it away. Deprived of her expected
" ſupport, ſhe fell to the earth, and her
" head ſtruck with ſuch violence againſt
" the pedeſtal of a river god, that ſhe lay
" extended in a ſwoon. Terrified and
" aghaſt, I flew to the watry divinity, and
" in endeavouring to tear from him his
" urn, in which I meant to bring water to
" refreſh the lady, I pulled him to the
" ground and laid him in ſhattered frag-
" ments at my feet. This diſaſter occa-
" ſioned a new uproar; for the ſedge
" crowned head fell on the gouty toe of
" the aged ſire of the injured fair one, who
" was hobbling to her aſſiſtance, and now
" in a perilous rage interſperſed his groans,
" oaths and execrations, with the cries
" and ſcreams of the affrighted ladies.
" Regardleſs, however, of this new mis-
" fortune, I haſtily caught the vaſe, and
" filling it with water at the lake, com-
" pletely drenched the proſtrate nymph
" who

" who ſtill lay lifeleſs on the graſs. Our " hoſt, meantime, who greatly prided " himſelf on his collection of ſtatues, be- " held with horror and diſmay the demo- " lition of his beloved Xanthus, and, " without in the leaſt attending to the " fainting lady; paſſionately bewailed his " misfortune, and pronounced a funeral " oration over the precious remains, in " which the merits of the defunct were ex- " tolled to the heavens.

" Like Helen in the night when Troy " was ſacked, 'I gazed in ſilent conſter- 'nation on the devaſtation that ſurrounded 'me.' My unhappy aukwardneſs, which, " to many of the ſpectators wore the aſpect " of premeditated miſchief, drew down on " my devoted head the heavieſt maledic- " tions; but a lover of the lady, who was " preſent at the tranſaction, loaded me " with every invective his paſſion could " ſupply.

" He called me a brute, a barbarian— " a monſter let looſe from the infernal re- " gions to be the ſcourge of ſociety.

" Haughty

" Haughty and irascible as I was by na-
" ture, I bore this injurious treatment with
" the utmost gentleness. I even advanced
" to apologize; but enraged at my ap-
" proach, he aimed at me a violent blow,
" and bid me begone forever from his
" presence. This insult recalled my na-
" tural impetuosity, and flying to him
" with the headlong ferocity of an angry
" lion, I caught him in my arms and pre-
" cipitated him into the midst of the lake.
" Then abruptly quitting the company, I
" flew through the fields and stopped not
" till I had reached my father's seat,
" which was some miles distant. The
" disorder of my dress—and the violent
" agitation in which I arrived, induced
" the domestics to believe me insane; and
" in reality the distraction of my mind
" was little short of madness. I doubted
" not that I had murdered the unhappy
" lovers, their ghosts haunted my con-
" science with all the horrors of guilt, and
" if I had not been immediately relieved
" from my apprehensions by the arrival of
" my

" my family, I believe my reaſon would
" have fallen a victim to the dreadful
" anxiety of my mind.

" I learned with inexpreſſible joy, that
" the lady and her lover were ſtill in being,
" though it was with difficulty the life of
" the latter had been ſaved. My father
" reflected very ſeverely on my raſhneſs
" and paſſion; my mother glanced a little
" at my aukwardneſs; but my brother de-
" clared it was the higheſt wrought ſcene
" he had ever been witneſs to; that he
" would not have loſt it for a thouſand
" guineas, and ſolemnly proteſted it had
" more than recompenſed him for the loſs
" of the ball with which the evening was
" to have concluded. He then gave ſo
" ludicrous an account of the adventure,
" that my father's gravity began to relax;
" my mother laughed heartily, and, mor-
" tified and diſtreſſed as I was, I could
" not withſtand the ridicule of his de-
" ſcription. But my good humour was
" interrupted by an incident which ef-
" fectually diſſipated my mirthful tenden-
" cies,

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" cipitated him into the midſt of the lake.
" Then abruptly quitting the company, I
" flew through the fields and ſtopped not
" till I had reached my father's ſeat,
" which was ſome miles diſtant. The
" diſorder of my dreſs—and the violent
" agitation in which I arrived, induced
" the domeſtics to believe me inſane; and
" in reality the diſtraction of my mind
" was little ſhort of madneſs. I doubted
" not that I had murdered the unhappy
" lovers, their ghoſts haunted my con-
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" ſcription. But my good humour was
" interrupted by an incident which ef-
" fectually diſſipated my mirthful tenden-

" cies,

" cies, and reduced me to a perplexity
" ſuperior to any I had yet encountered.
" A ſervant privately delivered me a
" letter. It was a challenge from the gen-
" tleman I had doubly injured, in the per-
" ſon of his miſtreſs and in his own. I
" ſhuddered with horror when I read it.
" My breaſt was not callous to the ſtings
" of conſcience or the dictates of hu-
" manity. I felt an inſurmountable re-
" pugnance to the idea of ſheathing my
" ſword in the boſom of a fellow-creature
" —of a man whoſe deſtruction I had
" once ſo nearly accompliſhed—a man who
" had never really injured me; for words
" uttered in the heat of paſſion were ſuf-
" ficiently expiated by the chaſtiſement I
" had already beſtowed on him—beſides,
" I conſidered myſelf as the firſt aggreſſor,
" and could with pleaſure have acknow-
" ledged my involuntary fault and en-
" treated forgiveneſs But when I re-
" flected that a ſubmiſſion of this nature
" would be attributed by the undiſcern-
" ing world to want of courage, and per-

" haps

" haps expoſe me to daily inſults, I re-
" jected the idea with diſdain; my haughty
" ſpirit refuſed to crouch; I determined
" at all events to meet my adverſary, and
" returned him an anſwer accordingly.

" Conſcience, that awful and terrific
" judge—the vicegerent of the Almighty,
" loudly aſſerted her empire in my breaſt!
" but her dictates were ſtifled by the voice
" of that demon, who uſurps in ſociety the
" ſacred name of honour. After a te-
" dious night of diſtreſs and uncertainty,
" during which I revolved a thouſand dif-
" ferent plans in my mind, I at length re-
" ſolved on an expedient which appeared
" to me in ſome meaſure calculated to re-
" concile thoſe jarring principles.

" At five next morning I departed
" alone, and unperceived by any of the
" family. I waited not long for my an-
" tagoniſt, who came accompanied by ano-
" ther young gentleman, his friend. They
" expreſſed great ſurprize at finding me
" alone. I replied, that from the charac-
" ter of my adverſary, I had an implicit
" reliance

" reliance on his honour; that I had no
" domeſtic to whoſe fidelity I could en-
" truſt my ſecret, and that I could not
" reſolve to involve my brother in a quar-
" rel which might, perhaps, be fatal to
" us both, and ſend our affectionate pa-
" rents childleſs to the grave.

" The friend now interpoſed and en-
" deavoured to accommodate our differ-
" ence; but my implacable enemy rejected
" the propoſal with contempt, and de-
" clared that nothing but my blood could
" obliterate the injuries he had received.

" The ground was marked out; my an-
" tagoniſt fired but miſſed me. I fired in
" my turn; but in purſuance of the reſo-
" lution I had formed, purpoſely kept
" wide of my mark. He then took aim
" with judgment; I received his ball in
" my left arm. The anguiſh of my wound
" recalled to my mind its native ferocity,
" and had well nigh overcome the reſolu-
" tion I had formed. Fired with a thirſt
" of vengeance, I aimed with a fatal pre-
" ciſion at his heart.—I was never known

" to

" to miſs my mark—one moment had in-
" volved me in eternal miſery—but in that
" little moment—

" Conſideration, like an angel came!"

" The tumult of my ſoul ſubſided. I
" looked up to heaven with adoring gra-
" titude, and turning from my adverſary,
" flung my piſtol on the ground. Un-
" able to explain the motives of my ex-
" traordinary conduct, I left them, and
" directed my ſteps homewards; but had
" not proceeded many paces, when over-
" come by the agitation of my ſpirits, and
" weakened by loſs of blood, I ſunk on
" the ground. Recovered from their firſt
" aſtoniſhment, they flew to my aſſiſtance
" and raiſed me in their arms.

" You will now, ſaid I, turning to my
" enemy, no longer with-hold your for-
" giveneſs from a man whom you cannot
" ſuſpect of ſoliciting it through baſe and
" puſillanimous motives. My offence to
" the lady was involuntary—my treatment
" of you was the conſequence of your own

" raſh-

" raſhneſs; I came hither with a fixed de-
" termination not to attempt your life—
" but to ſubmit my own to the diſpoſal of
" Providence. I hope I have convinced
" you that in a better cauſe I ſhould not
" fear to die.

" They felt the full force of this con-
" duct; for they were men of real worth.
" My adverſary embracing me, lamented
" his ignorance of my character, and loaded
" me with encomiums too flattering to re-
" peat. They bound my arm, of which
" they perceived the bone was broken; and
" obſerving that I fainted through loſs of
" blood, they conveyed me to Lord Man-
" ſell's ſeat, whoſe viſitors they both were.
" A ſurgeon was ſent for, who dreſſed my
" wound; but deſired that I ſhould on no
" account be removed.

" My family had been apprized of the
" duel, and terrified with the exaggerated
" accounts they had received of my hurt,
" they came and were rejoiced to find me
" alive.—My father liſtened with rapture
" to the circumſtances of the affair, and

" my

" my brother affectionately reproached me
" for not making him my ſecond.

" I continued a fortnight at Lord Man-
" ſell's houſe, during which period I was
" treated by its benevolent proprietors
" with the tenderneſs of indulgent parents.
" I was not deficient in feeling or gratitude
" —never will the remembrance of their
" virtues be erazed from my heart.

" I remained not long at my father's be-
" fore I was perfectly recovered. But
" though the circumſtances of my ren-
" countre, which were repeated extremely
" to my advantage, might have ſecured
" me a more favourable reception from
" the ladies, ſo great was the horror with
" which the fatal conſequences of my firſt
" attempt at gallantry had impreſſed my
" mind, that I determined never to make
" a ſecond eſſay; but for the future to at-
" tach myſelf entirely to ſtudy. Lady
" Manſell was the only female whoſe pre-
" ſence I could ſupport. Whenever my
" mother had any viſitors of her own ſex,
" I retired to my ſtudy, or if the weather

" was

" was fine, amuſed myſelf with a con-
" templative ramble through the moſt un-
" frequented parts of the country. In
" theſe ſolitary excurſions I contracted a
" paſſion for botany; and as I had done
" with the Univerſity, I entreated my fa-
" ther's permiſſion to ſtudy phyſic at
" Leyden. It was not without exceſſive
" reluctance he conſented to this meaſure;
" he had great intereſt in the church, and
" wiſhed me extremely to take orders.
" But as I had an high idea of the duties
" annexed to that ſacred function, and
" was conſcious I had no peculiar voca-
" tion to it, I thought it a profanation to
" embrace it through lucrative motives,
" and firmly perſiſted in my choice.

" My brother and I now parted for the
" firſt time; he ſet off to make the Tour of
" Europe; and I retired to Leyden. Op-
" poſite as our diſpoſitions and purſuits
" had been, a real affection ſubſiſted be-
" tween us; our ſeparation from each
" other, and from our parents, was truly
" affecting.

" As

" As I was of an open and unguarded " temper, I ſoon became intimate with " ſeveral of the young ſtudents; but there " was one in particular, the ſweetneſs of " whoſe manners peculiarly engaged my " eſteem. He was a French Hugonot of " the name of la Valiere. His mother, who " was a widow, a lady of noble birth, but " inconſiderable fortune, had accompanied " him to Leyden, with a deſign to reſide " there as long as he ſhould find it neceſ- " ſary to purſue his ſtudies.

" The converſation of this young man " was a great relief to me. He uſed fre- " quently to entreat me to ſuffer him to in- " troduce me to his mother and ſiſter, but " I declined his obliging offers through a " conſciouſneſs of my want of poliſh, na- " turally concluding that if I had appeared " in a light ſo diſadvantageous to my own " country women, the French ladies, ac- " cuſtomed to gallantry more refined, " would conſider me as a perfect ſavage.

" It was autumn when I arrived at " Leyden, and notwithſtanding the re-

" monſtrances of my friend I firmly ad-
" hered all the winter to my reſolution of
" renouncing all converſe with the fair.

" In ſpring I determined to indulge my
" paſſion for retirement, and hired lodg-
" ings in a houſe agreeably ſituated at ſome
" diſtance from the town.

" De la Valiere, who often favoured
" me with his company, grew enamoured
" of my ſolitude, and prevailed on his
" mother to hire apartments in the ſame
" houſe.

" Though by no means pleaſed with
" this vicinity, I could not with decency
" object to it. I determined, however,
" ſtill to keep aloof; and whenever I ac-
" cidentally encountered Madam de la
" Valiere or her daughter, I contented
" myſelf with ſlightly bowing as they
" paſſed me.

" My friend noticed my unaccountable
" reſerve, and, weary with framing excu-
" ſes, I candidly confeſſed my motives;
" they diverted him extremely, but he
" ceaſed to importune me.

" In

" In my retirement I amuſed myſelf with
" my ſtudies, muſic, and taking draughts
" of plants and flowers, which I coloured
" from nature. Every evening, when it
" grew duſkiſh, I uſed to retire to an ar-
" bour in the moſt diſtant part of the gar-
" den, and entertain myſelf with a flute or
" a violin, to which I often joined my
" voice; and I frequently perceived de la
" Valiere and his ſiſter, ſometimes accom-
" panied by their mother, to walk for
" hours in a little wilderneſs that ran be-
" hind the arbour. The love of admira-
" tion is prevalent in every boſom—I ex-
" erted my utmoſt ſkill, and of an evening
" when any accident deprived me of my
" little audience, I immediately returned
" home, chagrined and diſcontented.

" I continued thus, their unſeen mu-
" ſician, for near a month; when one
" evening that I had been out in ſearch of
" ſimples, on returning home earlier than
" I was expected, I was ſurprized to find
" de le Valiere with his mother and ſiſter
" in my apartment. He had my port

" folio on the table, and they were ſo bu-
" ſily engaged in examining the contents,
" that they perceived not my entrance.

" What beautiful flowers!" exclaimed Mademoiſelle de la Valiere; " your En-
" gliſh friend is a ſuperior genius, my
" brother; why will he not allow us to
" know him!—why will he thus oblige us
" to admire him at a diſtance! What de-
" licate tints—what lively colouring!—
" I expire with impatience (Je meurs
" d'enire, was her expreſſion) to learn
" this enchanting ſcience!"

" Permit me then, Madam, to have the
" honour of inſtructing you," ſaid I.
" She turned quick, and bluſhed extremely
" at this addreſs; nor was I leſs embar-
" reſſed; for the ſpirit that animated my
" gallantry had entirely evaporated in this
" little compliment; the firſt, I believe,
" that ever paſſed my lips;—but it was
" my heart that ſpoke, and I could not
" repreſs its dictates. We both looked
" ſo extremely ſilly, that Madam de la

" Valiere

" Valiere and her ſon could not forbear
" ſmiling at each other.

" The latter, however, apologized for
" the liberty he had taken, and entreated
" my pardon, which I accorded him with
" the beſt grace in my power.

" We have indeed, been very aſſuming,
" ſaid Madam de la Valiere, and I ſhall
" not be perſuaded that Monſieur forgives
" our preſumption, unleſs he confers on
" us another favour by conſenting to ſpend
" this evening with us."

" Extremely engaged by the manners
" of this amiable family, and flattered by
" the admiration they expreſſed of my ta-
" lents, I no longer wiſhed to decline an
" intimacy they appeared ſo ſolicitous to
" promote. I accompanied them to their
" apartment—their exceſſive eaſe and vi-
" vacity entirely diſſipated my conſtraint
" —and I converſed with almoſt as much
" freedom as if in the ſociety of my male
" companions.

" I ſung and played at their requeſt.
" Madam de la Valiere was laviſh in my

" praiſe; her daughter, the lovely Jaque-
" line, ſaid nothing; but ſhe gave me a
" look of approbation more expreſſive
" than a thouſand words.

" The night was far advanced when I
" left them, charmed with their ſociety,
" and regretting the pleaſures I had loſt by
" having ſo obſtinately perſiſted in abſent-
" ing myſelf from it. I retired to reſt,
" and my dreams repreſented the occur-
" rences of an evening, the moſt delight-
" ful I had ever paſſed.

" I awoke next morning with the ſame
" agreeable impreſſions on my mind, and
" inſtead of immuring myſelf as uſual in
" my ſtudy, I took my flute and went into
" the garden, where I knew Madam de la
" Valiere and her daughter frequently
" walked. I was not diſappointed; they
" ſoon joined me; and as Madam de la
" Valiere was a woman of ſenſe and edu-
" cation, I was with her at no loſs for
" ſubjects of converſation. Jaqueline,
" too enlivened us with her artleſs viva-
" city. 'Timid, tender, ſweetly wild;'—

" her

" her figure was enchanting, and her tem-
" per the moſt engaging that it is poſſible
" to conceive. Shall I own to you my
" weakneſs, and acknowledge that a reſem-
" blance which ſtruck me on our firſt in-
" terview at Sir Humphry Mordaunt's,
" between you and my long loſt Jaque-
" line, inſpired me with a ſtronger par-
" tiality than I had ever experienced for
" any woman, except herſelf? Your fea-
" tures, indeed, are different, but their
" expreſſion is the ſame; and if I poſſeſs
" any diſcernment, your ſouls are ſtill
" more ſimilar!

" As we walked through the gardens,
" Jaqueline ſtopped to admire a beautiful
" auricula. I plucked it and preſented it
" to her.

" Keep it yourſelf," ſaid ſhe, " it would
" ſoon wither in my boſom; but preſerved
" by your happy art, it ſhall bloom
" throughout the year, and bid defiance
" to the froſts of winter."

" You, my lovely friend, who from
" your infancy have been accuſtomed to

" the language of praiſe and approbation,
" can form no adequate conception of my
" feelings. I had been beloved by my
" mother, and pitied by Lady Manſell;
" but thus to find myſelf admired by the
" lovelieſt of your ſex, was a happineſs ſo
" unexpected—it operated like enchant-
" ment on my ſenſes, and ſeemed to open
" to my ſoul a new and exquiſite ſenſe of
" pleaſure.

" I took the auricula, and retiring to
" my own apartment, copied it with un-
" uſual ſucceſs. In the evening I again
" threw myſelf in Jaqueline's way — I
" wiſhed to preſent her the flower I had
" painted, but wanted aſſurance to men-
" tion it; however, as I purpoſely wore
" the original in my breaſt, in the courſe
" of the evening ſhe again expreſſed a de-
" ſire to ſee it imitated. I replied ſimply,
" that I had done it already. She looked
" pleaſed and requeſted to ſee it. I brought
" it to her and received new praiſes.

" Encouraged by their encomiums, I
" again offered to be her preceptor in a
" ſcience

" ſcience ſhe ſo greatly admired; though
" whilſt I ſpoke I trembled, leſt I ſhould
" be mortified by a refuſal. She bluſhed
" and turned to her mother, who politely
" thanked me for my propoſal, and ac-
" cepted it with apparent ſatisfaction. I
" looked at Jaqueline, and ſaw her eyes
" ſparkle with joy. From that day I com-
" menced my dangerous employment, and
" Jaqueline received my inſtructions with
" wonderful facility. Every occupation
" but ſuch as tended to render me pleaſing
" to her was renounced; my ſtudies were
" entirely neglected, and I devoted my
" time to muſic and painting. Yet think
" not, that, like Cymon, I underwent a
" ſudden transformation. No—I ſtill re-
" tained my characteriſtic roughneſs, and
" was often rallied by my ſweet pupil for
" want of gallantry. But her manner
" was ſo playful and lively—and her rail-
" lery ſo eaſy and good-natured, that ſo
" far from feeling hurt by it, I could not
" forbear joining in the laugh, and was
" often the firſt to ridicule myſelf.

" I aſked her one day, how ſhe, who " had been acuſtomed to the exceſſive po- " liteneſs of the French, could reconcile " herſelf to manners ſo ſtrongly contraſted " as mine?"

" Their politeneſs," replied ſhe, " is " over-ſtrained; nor can I feel my vanity " much gratified by gallantry laviſhed " without diſcrimination. Had I met you " unbiaſſed by a prepoſſeſſion in your fa- " vour, I might probably have been " ſhocked by the contraſt you ſpeak of. " But the repreſentations of my brother " had procured you my eſteem before I " ſaw you—the ſingularity of your cha- " racter excited my curioſity, which was " heightened by a reſerve and diſtance that " my brother taught me to believe pro- " ceeded from timidity. On our firſt acci- " dental interview, your manners were more " poliſhed than I expected to find them. " We naturally connect the ideas of ſince- " rity and candour, with the appearance " of plainneſs and ſimplicity of manners. " —had yours been more refined, I doubt

" if

" if I ſhould have thought them ſo plea-
" ſing. Such as they are, I do not wiſh
" you to part with them—they poſſeſs a
" novelty that to me renders them agree-
" able—and I cannot think that any al-
" teration would be to your advantage.

" The expreſſion of her countenance
" was ſo ſweet and artleſs whilſt ſhe ſpoke,
" that, animated by an effuſion of tender-
" neſs that I could not repreſs, I caught
" her hand and preſſed it to my lips.

" We were both inſtantly covered with
" confuſion; but mine was the greateſt,
" and ſhe ſooneſt recovered.

" Why," ſaid ſhe, " would you adopt
" the manners you have juſt now heard
" me cenſure? Do you imagine, that be-
" cauſe a French woman, I am inſenſible
" to the merit of a modeſt and reſpectful
" conduct, and only to be charmed by
" boldneſs and preſumption."

" I bluſhed ſo deeply at this reproof,
" and appeared ſo really afflicted by her
" diſpleaſure, that ſhe immediately reſu-

" med her gentleneſs, and endeavoured to
" encourage me by particular attention.
" Oh, my friend, how ſwiftly did that
" ſummer glide away!—It was one dream
" of bliſs—one ſweet delirium of fancy!
" —Towards the cloſe of it, as I was pre-
" paring one morning to attend my lovely
" pupil as uſual, I received a meſſage from
" Madam de la Valiere, to inform me that
" her daughter could not that morning
" have the pleaſure of receiving my in-
" ſtructions.
" Though chagrined at this prevention,
" and curious to know the occaſion of it,
" I felt a conſciouſneſs which would not
" ſuffer me to make any enquiries from
" Madam de la Valier's ſervant, who
" brought the meſſage; and as it had quite
" the air of a prohibition, neither could I
" go to her apartment to ſatisfy my doubts.
" I determined however to watch them
" from my windows, and ere long beheld
" them in the garden, accompanied by a
" ſtranger, whoſe dreſs and mein ſeemed
" to announce him of ſuperior rank. I

" viewed

" viewed him with a kind of inſtinctive
" horror, and for the firſt time experienced
" the ſcorpion ſtings of jealouſy.

" I paſſed a moſt tedious and painful
" day; but in the evening my impatience
" could no longer brook reſtraint—and as
" our intimacy warranted this liberty, I
" went without ceremony to Madam de la
" Valiere's apartment. Though ſhe re-
" ceived me with her uſual politeneſs, I
" was ſtruck with an alteration in her
" manners, and I eaſily diſcerned through
" the gaiety ſhe aſſumed, a much greater
" propenſity to ſerioufneſs than to mirth.
" In Jaqueline's features, her feelings
" were ſtill more apparent. They were
" expreſſive of a penſiveneſs I never be-
" fore perceived, and were no longer ani-
" mated by thoſe ſweet ſmiles which were
" wont to call up the ideas of joy and rap-
" ture to my boſom. My ſympathetic
" heart caught the infectious ſadneſs—I
" was ſoftened to a degree of unmanly
" weakneſs, and could with difficulty re-
" ſtrain my tears.

" Jaque-

" Jaqueline threw down her eyes, as if " afraid of meeting mine. We both ſat " ſilent and dejected; but the ſtranger ex- " amined us with an air of ſuſpicious ſcru- " tiny.—I learned from his converſation " with Madam de la Valiere, that he was " a German, and that his title was Count " Jerzenhorff.—He appeared to be about " thirty-five. His manners were noble, " and his face would have been handſome, " but for a cloud of auſterity that lowered " on his brow. He ſeemed much addic- " ted to taciturnity, and his deportment " was ſedate and ſolemn. When it grew " dark he retired, with a promiſe of re- " newing his viſit next day.

" Obſerving that my preſence impoſed " a reſtraint on Jaqueline and her mother, " I immediately retired, involved in in- " conceiveable diſtreſs and perplexity; for " my friend, from whom I might have " hoped an explanation, was abſent on a " party of pleaſure, and his return was not " expected for ſome time.

" The

" The moon ſhone bright and invited " me abroad; and when I imagined the " family were at reſt, I took my flute and " went into the garden.—I ſoothed my " melancholy with ſuch ſoft and plaintive " airs as were conſonant with my feelings. " I ceaſed for a time, and ſtood beneath " the window of Jaqueline's apartment— " I heard the caſement gently opened— " this was a proof of ſympathy too flat- " tering to eſcape the penetration of a " lover! I retired to ſome diſtance and re- " ſumed my flute; but its melancholy me- " lody was often interrupted by my ſighs " and tears.—Thus did I paſs the night; " and it was not until ſunriſe that I left " the garden.

" The Count came early next day; but " as it rained, I could not even enjoy the " ſatisfaction of beholding Jaqueline from " my window. However, I paſſed the " night as I had done the preceding one, " and had the ſame reaſon to flatter myſelf " that ſhe was not inſenſible to my ſorrow.

" The

" The next morning Madam de la Va-
" liere ſent to requeſt my company.

" With a palpitating heart I obeyed the
" ſummons, and found her alone with
" Jaqueline. She apologiſed for her neg-
" lect of me, and informed me, that as
" ſhe was obliged to leave her lodgings
" precipitately, ſhe had ſent for me to bid
" her adieu, and return me the acknow-
" ledgements due to me by her daughter
" and herſelf. Confounded by this intel-
" ligence, I was unable to reply. I
" looked at Jaqueline, who had never
" raiſed her eyes from the time of my en-
" trance; and now hiding her face with
" her handkerchief, ſhe reclined her head
" on the back of her mother's chair. I
" heard Madam de la Valiere ſigh deeply,
" and methought ſhe beheld us both with
" looks of compaſſion. In this ſituation
" a ſervant announced the Count. Jaque-
" line ſtarted, and the handkerchief which
" concealed her face fell to the ground.
" I flew to reach it to her and ſaw her

" beautiful

" beautiful eyes ſtreaming with tears. " Regardleſs of the preſence of her mo- " ther, or the approach of my deteſted ri- " val, in a tranſport of mingled tender- " neſs and deſpair, I flung myſelf at her " feet, and embracing her knees, in ſounds " ſcarce articulate, conjured her not to " abandon me.

" Madam de la Valiere was ſtrangely " affected at this ſcene; but her confuſion " was encreaſed by the voice of the Count, " who was already in the antichamber. " She entreated me to retire through a " door that led to the back ſtairs; but be- " fore I could recover from my emotion, " ſhe was obliged to leave us to receive " the Count and prevent his entrance. " Jaqueline, as if terrified at the ſound of " his voice, flew from me and ruſhed out " of the room through the private door. " I followed her—I caught her hand—ſhe " ſeemed unable to ſpeak, but made me a " ſign to retire. I reluctantly obeyed her " —but though my apprehenſions of lo- " ſing her forever were now nearly con-

" firmed

" firmed to a dreadful certainty, the con-
" viction of being beloved by her, ſoftened
" the ſenſe of my miſery, and almoſt re-
" conciled me to anguiſh.

" In the evening I ſaw them depart in
" the Count's carriage—but I will not fa-
" tigue you with a repetition of my ſuffer-
" ings—they were indeed inexpreſſible!

" It was long ere I could aſſume calm-
" neſs ſufficient to make any enquiry—
" however, I learned from the ſervants of
" the houſe, that they had retired to a
" ſmall, but elegant villa ſituated on the
" oppoſite ſide of the town. I got my di-
" rections, and when it was dark, ſet out
" to reconnoitre the new habitation of my
" Jaqueline. Behind it was a little grove
" which was ſeparated from the garden by
" a thick hedge. This obſtacle I eaſily
" ſurmounted and paſſed the night in rang-
" ing through the allies, and walking be-
" neath the windows. All was ſtill and
" ſilent, and at day-break I retired. All
" day I watched in diſguiſe about the ave-
" nues of the houſe; but could not catch

" even

" even a diſtant glimpſe of my beloved
" Jaqueline. At night I reſumed my
" wonted ſtation, and on a little ſoft fla-
" gelet I had purpoſely brought, I brea-
" thed thoſe melancholy notes which were
" moſt expreſſive of my ſorrow.—It was
" bright moonlight, and I plainly diſ-
" covered a female figure at one of the
" windows—my heart told me it was my
" Jaqueline, and it did not deceive me.

" I ſometimes reſolved to go boldly to
" the houſe and openly aſſert my claim to
" her affections; but conſcious of my own
" impetuoſity, the dread of committing
" ſome fatal outrage if I ſhould meet the
" Count, detained me, and I determined
" to wait the arrival of La Valiere, who
" was hourly expected.—Next night I had
" no ſooner cleared the garden hedge, than
" a man, whom I inſtantly knew to be
" the Count, ruſhed from an arbour where
" he had lain concealed, and drawing his
" rapier deſired me to ſtand — and en-
" quired in a haughty tone—how I dared
" thus, like a thief, to enter that demeſne?

" Fired

" Fired with indignation and a thirſt for " vengeance, I ſuddenly drew—and aſked " by what authority he preſumed to ſtop " me?"

" By the authority of a lover—ſaid he " —of a favoured one!".

" 'Tis an infernal falſehood!" cried I, foaming with rage.—" By heaven thou art " not—thou ſhalt never be the favoured " lover of Jaqueline, whilſt I have life to " prevent it."

" I waited not for a reply, but aimed " at him a thruſt which he parried. His " phlegm gave him too greatly the ad- " vantage; after a few more paſſes, his " weapon entered my breaſt, and I fell life- " leſs on the ground.

" Poor Jaqueline had, as uſual, ex- " pected me at her window; but her ears " were now aſſailed with ſounds far dif- " ferent from thoſe tender notes of love, " to which they had been accuſtomed— " by the claſhing of ſwords, ſucceeded by " my groans.

" Seized

" Seized with affright and horror, ſhe " alarmed the family with her cries, and " flew to the fatal ſcene. She flung her- " ſelf on my bleeding body, and her paſ- " ſionate complaints awoke me from my " inſenſibility.

" Oh, my Seymor, did you then die for " your Jaqueline! Monſter, aſſaſſin— " murderer"—cried ſhe, turning to the Count; " are theſe thy triumphs! behold " the loveliеſt—the moſt beloved of men " a breathleſs bleeding corſe! But think " not I'll ſurvive him! Seymor, my friend " —my lover—you died unconſcious of " my tenderneſs.

" Oh Delia, what were my ſenſations! " I thought myſelf dying; but the harps " of angels ſeemed to vibrate in my ears! " Jaqueline claſped me to her boſom—ſhe " preſſed her cheek to mine!—Ages of " anguiſh ſeemed repaid by the tranſports " of a moment!—Exceſſive joy co-ope- " rating with the effuſion of my blood, " overpowered my ſenſes, and I fainted " away. How long I continued in my

" trance,

" trance, I know not. The violent pain
" I received from the dreſſing of my wound
" firſt awoke me from it. I looked around
" and perceived myſelf in a ſtrange apart-
" ment—but the ſurgeon, who was per-
" forming the operation, had been my
" friend and fellow-ſtudent. I aſked if my
" wound was mortal? He ſaid, he hoped
" it was not; but concern and conſterna-
" tion were viſible in his countenance. I
" remarked them with pleaſure; for death
" was now become the object of my ſu-
" preme ambition.

" For two days my fever continued ex-
" tremely high, and my ſenſes were diſ-
" ordered. On the third I ſunk into a
" ſlumber, and from it I awoke once more
" to the light of reaſon, which, like the
" rays of the returning ſun after a tem-
" peſtuous night of horrors, ſerved only
" to diſcover the deſolation that ſur-
" rounded me!"

" The firſt object that ſtruck me, was
" De la Valiere, who hung over me in ſi-
" lent

" lent ſorrow. He embraced me with " great tenderneſs.

" Oh my friend," cried I, " what " ſtrange events have occurred ſince our " ſeparation! Tell me where am I? where " is your ſiſter? where is the Count?"

" Repreſs this curioſity," replied he; " you are extremely weak.

" Oh!" cried I, " this dreadful ſuſ- " pence muſt prove more injurious to my " health than the moſt fatal certainty. " Who is this Count? Satisfy my impa- " tience, I conjure you; and explain to me " the nature of the ties by which he is " connected with your family."

" After a few more remonſtrances on " his ſide, and entreaties on mine, he con- " ſented to my wiſhes, and gave me the " explanation I ſo paſſionately deſired.

" The Count Jerzenhorff," ſaid he, " is " a noble German, whoſe family has been " long united with ours by the bonds of " friendſhip, and by the ties of conſan- " guinity. His father, on his death-bed, " bequeathed him to the guardianſhip of

" mine;

" trance, I know not. The violent pain
" I received from the dreſſing of my wound
" firſt awoke me from it. I looked around
" and perceived myſelf in a ſtrange apart-
" ment—but the ſurgeon, who was per-
" forming the operation, had been my
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" mine;

" mine;—he received his education in our
" family, and continued through choice
" to reſide in it, until Jaqueline had at-
" tained her tenth year. Young as ſhe
" then was, the Count perceived in her
" early graces, the promiſe of her preſent
" beauties and attractions; and as he was
" obliged to go to the Eaſt-Indies, to take
" poſſeſſion of a very rich property be-
" queathed him by an uncle, he prevailed
" on my father to promiſe him the hand
" of Jaqueline, at his return, which, as
" his foreign affairs had been greatly dif-
" arranged, he foreſaw would not be in
" leſs than four or five years. Three
" years after his departure, my father died;
" but in his laſt moments, conjured my
" mother to adhere religiouſly to his en-
" gagement with the Count; and even ex-
" torted from the little Jaqueline a ſacred
" promiſe to receive him as her huſband.
" For two years ſubſequent to this event
" we conſtantly received letters from the
" Count, accompanied by preſents of con-
" ſiderable value; but after ſometime this

" cor-

" correſpondence was totally diſcontinued
" on his ſide, and for the two laſt years
" we never received the ſlighteſt intelli-
" gence of him. This apparent neglect
" naturally induced us to conclude, he no
" longer deſired an alliance with our fa-
" mily; and when we retired to Leyden,
" we conſidered ourſelves as freed from
" engagements which he did not appear
" ſolicitous to aſſert, and from your firſt
" intimacy with our family, we ſaw with
" pleaſure the growing attachment be-
" tween you and Jaqueline, which was
" evident to every one except yourſelves.

" Such was our ſituation when the
" Count unexpectedly arrived. He had
" written conſtantly, but his letters had
" been ſuppreſſed by his agent, who vil-
" lainouſly deceived him, and appro-
" priated to his own uſe the noble preſents
" which had been intended for ours. On
" an accidental diſcovery of this treachery,
" the Count doubly alarmed at receiving
" no letters from our family, embarked

" in the firſt ſhip that ſailed from France,
" and from thence purſued us hither.

" Though charmed with Jaqueline's
" innocence and beauty, he was diſguſted
" with her coldneſs and averſion; and your
" mutual emotion in the interview to
" which he was witneſs, revealed to his
" penetration the cauſe of his unfavour-
" able reception. My mother perceived
" and compaſſionated the conflicts of your
" boſom;—your midnight melody was not
" unmarked by her; her heart inclined
" her to your favour—but her honour was
" engaged. In purſuance of its dictates,
" ſhe determined to remove from your
" preſence an object which would only
" augment your affliction, and ſent an ex-
" preſs to haſten my return.—The Count
" was informed of your midnight excur-
" ſions—you know the reſt.

" Muſt then my Jaqueline be devoted
" to a wretch!—A barbarian, who avail-
" ing himſelf of parental authority, would
" drag the reluctant victim to the altar!
" Can Madam de la Valiere conſent to the

" inhuman

" inhuman ſacrifice of her lovely child!—
" Let her not ſtifle the ſoft pleadings of
" nature in her boſom!—It is the voice of
" the Divinity, and its dictates are ſupe-
" rior to arbitrary laws!"

" Oh my friend," cried de la Valiere,
" I dare not flatter you with hope! Yet
" the future is uncertain—perhaps the
" Count may generouſly relinquiſh his
" claim.—But let me now fly to acquaint
" Jaqueline with the reſtoration of your
" reaſon."

" He left me; and hopeleſs as was my
" preſent ſituation, I found it leſs intoler-
" able than the dreadful uncertainty I had
" before ſuſtained. From my friend the
" ſurgeon I learned, that I was at preſent
" in his apartments, whither I had been
" conveyed on the night of the rencounter
" by the domeſtics of Madam de la Valiere,
" whoſe habitation was at a ſmall diſtance.

" His care and attention greatly con-
" duced to my recovery; in a few days I
" was pronounced out of danger, and in
" a fortnight was able to leave my room.

" De la Valiere, meantime, was my " conſtant companion; but he avoided " mentioning Jaqueline, though when- " ever I had an opportunity I preſſed to " know her determination. Finding him " obſtinate in his evaſions, I entreated him " to deliver a letter to her; and after many " difficulties, he yielded to my inſtances, " or rather to the violence with which they " were enforced; for he knew my impe- " tuoſity, and dreaded to exaſperate me by " a refuſal.

" I wrote—my paſſion inſpired me with " eloquence.—I endeavoured to convince " her that it was a guilty profanation of " the moſt ſacred rites, to conſecrate her " vows to one man, whilſt her heart was " devoted to another. I invalidated a " vow extorted from a child; and conjured " her to conſent to a private union, and " accompany me to England; where my " family, who were not unworthy her al- " liance, would receive her with rapture— " (and indeed I had every thing to expect " from the indulgence of my parents); and

" in

" in concluſion, beſought her to favour me
" with a private interview.

" De la Valiere returned in the evening
" and brought me this anſwer.

The Letter.

" It were in vain to diſavow a paſſion
" of which I have already given ſuch fatal
" proofs. Yes, Seymor, I love you with
" the trueſt, the tendereſt affection that
" ever animated a human boſom!—but
" when I acknowledge your influence, I
" know you too generous to exert it un-
" worthily—to love you is my misfortune
" —to purſue the dictates of my paſſion
" would be a crime!

" Your reaſonings are fallacious—the
" voice of conſcience tells me they are.
" She alone can guide me through this
" wilderneſs of ſorrow. Diſobedience to
" the laſt commands of an expiring pa-
" rent!—a violated vow!—I ſhudder at
" the idea!—Fancy recalls the ſolemn
" ſcene to my imagination. My father
" claſps me to his dying boſom—I hear

" his groans!—His hands raiſed to heaven
" in ſpeechleſs agony! he ſupplicated its
" bleſſings on my head! Again I repeat
" that fatal promiſe—the ſource of all my
" miſery.—Oh Seymor! my beloved—my
" generous friend—abandon me to my
" deſtiny—ſuffer me to be unfortunate;
" but ſeek not to involve me in guilt.

" Receive this letter as my laſt adieu.—
" I dare not meet you.—Doubtful of my
" fortitude I muſt decline the trial! Re-
" turn alone to your country, and, if it is
" poſſible, forget the unhappy

" JAQUELINE."

" This letter threw me into the deepeſt
" deſpair; yet I had again the boldneſs to
" write to Jaqueline, and entreat even a
" parting interview;—but ſhe only ſent
" me a verbal refuſal by her brother,
" couched indeed in the gentleſt terms.
" —A few days afterwards I learned from
" common report (for de la Valiere dared
" not to be the meſſenger of my misfor-
" tune) that my Jaqueline had given her
" hand to the Count!

" En-

"Enraged at this intelligence, I foamed "with paſſion, and acted a thouſand ex- "travagancies.—I flew to poor la Valiere, "who that inſtant entered my apartment, "and loading him with every inſult my "fury could invent; accuſed him of be- "traying my friendſhip—and ſacrificing "his ſiſter to his own ambitious views!"

"He liſtened to me with gentleneſs, and "endeavoured to ſooth me by tenderneſs "and compaſſion. My rage exhauſted it- "ſelf—I flung myſelf on his neck, and "burſting into tears, conjured him to pity "and forgive me!"

"I determined to remain no longer in a "place ſo fatal to my repoſe. That very "night I left Leyden and took the road "to Paris, where I knew I ſhould have "the conſolation of meeting Lord and "Lady Manſell. De la Valiere accom- "panied me to the frontiers of France; "our ſeparation renewed all my affliction; "his countenance, his air—the amiable "gentleneſs of his manners, continually "reminded me of his ſiſter; and whilſt he

" remained with me, it ſeemed to me that " I loſt but the half of my Jaqueline.

" Lord and Lady Manſell were rejoiced " at my unexpected arrival; but greatly " ſhocked at my altered appearance. From " them I concealed not the adventure that " had occaſioned it; — they generouſly " ſympathized in my diſtreſs, and kindly " endeavoured to alleviate it.

" Like a wretch, who, born in dark- " neſs, receives the ſenſe of ſight but for " an interval that enables him to contem- " plate the fair and beautiful creation, and " again finds himſelf ſuddenly enveloped " in eternal ſhades! Such was my intel- " lectual darkneſs! I looked back to thoſe " happy hours of love and innocence I " had paſſed in the ſociety of Jaqueline; " and the retroſpection of my paſt felicity, " threw a deeper ſhade of horror over the " deſolation of my ſoul!

" Lady Manſell ſtrove to draw me from " my melancholy, by engaging me in the " moſt brilliant aſſemblies. The preſence " of your ſex was now no longer diſplea-

" ſing

" ſing to me; it was of too little conſe-
" quence to impreſs me with awe; and eaſe
" is the child of indifference. But inſtead
" of entering into the converſation, I ſat
" moody and ſilent. Sometimes, when
" provoked by the importunate civilities
" of the French, I returned their trouble-
" ſome politeneſs and profuſion of com-
" pliments, with the utmoſt contempt and
" aſperity; and my habitual gloom, in-
" terrupted by thoſe ſudden guſts of paſ-
" ſion, with great appearance of proba-
" bility, inſpired them with an opinion of
" my inſanity. I was pleaſed with an
" error which exempted me from an ob-
" ſervance of the common forms of ſociety,
" and requeſted Lord Manſell not to diſ-
" countenance the report. Thus when I
" choſe to join the converſation, they fan-
" cied me in one of my lucid intervals;
" and when I wiſhed to be alone or ſilent,
" they left me at liberty to purſue my in-
" clinations; and by this miſtake I avoided
" thoſe dangerous *fracas* in which my
" bluntneſs of expreſſion would probably

" have engaged me amongſt a people ſo
" tenacious of their honour.—But though
" the generality of the French may be of
" a light and frivolous character, I found
" amongſt them many men of ſolid un-
" derſtanding and deep erudition, whoſe
" converſation poſſeſſed charms almoſt pe-
" culiar to themſelves, enlivened by vi-
" vacity, animated by wit, and embel-
" liſhed with Attic elegance.

" In ſpring I bad adieu to my noble
" friends, and ſet out to join my brother,
" who was then at Venice.

" We continued two years in Italy; my
" brother had many adventures; but I de-
" clined partaking in any of them. Though
" my melancholy abated, the ſingularity
" of my manners ſtill adhered to me; and
" after an abſence of more than four years,
" I returned to England, nearly as un-
" couth and more whimſical, though not
" ſo aukward and timid, as when I left it.

" When our father wrote to deſire our
" return, we determined to croſs the Alps,
" and take our route through Switzerland

" —the

" —the reſidence of a free and virtuous
" people.

" A few days after our arrival at Ge-
" neva, as I rode out one morning along
" the borders of the Rhone, attended only
" by one ſervant and a Swiſs, whom I
" brought with me as a guide, I obſerved
" a fine ſeat at ſome diſtance, and on en-
" quiring to whom it belonged, was in-
" formed by the Swiſs, that its owner was
" the Count Jerzenhorff—gracious hea-
" ven! It was the manſion of my Jaque-
" line!—Seized with a violent emotion at
" this intelligence, and impelled by an
" irreſiſtible propenſity, I turned my horſe
" towards it. I got on a riſing ground
" which commanded a more diſtant pro-
" ſpect of the demeſne. As my ſight was
" rather ſhort, I never travelled without
" a teleſcope; by its aſſiſtance, I could
" diſcover a number of perſons, who by
" their dreſs I judged to be peaſants,
" dancing on a noble lawn that fronted the
" caſtle. I alſo perceived amongſt them
" ſome whoſe air and appearance beſpoke

" them of ſuperior quality, and I even " fancied I could diſtinguiſh my Jaque- " line. Fired with the idea of once more " beholding a perſon ſo dear to me, I de- " termined on the execution of a plan " which that inſtant occurred to me. I " obliged the Swiſs peaſant who attended " me as a guide, to change habits with me, " and giving him a piece of money, laid " ſtrict injuctions on him and my other " ſervant, who was French, not to ſtir " from the place until my return.

" I proceeded alone to the caſtle; my " habit ſecured me from ſuſpicion; I aſked " a peaſant whom I overtook on the way " the occaſion of the rejoicings, and if I " might be permitted to partake in them!

" You are not of this canton," replied he, " or you could not be ignorant that " this is the anniverſary of the Count's " marriage, which is always celebrated " with a feſtival as at preſent. Come with " me, continued he, you will be welcome " to the Counteſs;—her ſweetneſs and af-

" fability

" fability have rendered her the idol of " the country."

" If the old man had not been almoſt " blind, he muſt have perceived my violent " agitation. I followed him, however, " with trembling ſteps, and on entering " the lawn obſerved my Jaqueline ſur- " rounded by ladies, amongſt whom was " Madam de la Valiere. I retired behind " ſome trees againſt which I ſupported my- " ſelf.—She mingled in the dance, and " ſeemed to partake in and encourage the " joy of her ruſtic gueſts. — I ſaw the " Count—he did not dance, but repoſed " himſelf at ſome diſtance beneath a pa- " villion.

" When the dance was done, the Coun- " teſs retired from the company, and " ſeated herſelf on the turf beneath a " ſpreading tree; behind it ran a ſhrub- " bery which ſkirted the lawn. I wiſhed " to attract her attention, and would have " ſacrificed worlds for a moment's conver- " ſation with her. My former method " recurred to my memory. I went to the

" muſicians,

" muſicians, and prevailing on them to " ſupply me with a flute, I retired into " the wilderneſs.

" For a time I watched her in ſilence— " her attitude was penſive, and methought " I ſaw her wipe away a tear. I took the " flute and began to breathe on it the " ſame plaintive notes with which I had " been accuſtomed to expreſs my unhappy " paſſion. She ſtarted from her ſeat at " the well known ſounds, and gazing " wildly round her, ruſhed into the ſhrub- " bery; but I had ceaſed, unable to pro- " ceed. She ſaw me, but was deceived " by my dreſs.—

" Peaſant," ſhe cried, in an agitated tone, " what wild notes of melody were thoſe I " heard!" Her eyes met mine as ſhe ſpoke —ſhe inſtantly recognized me.

" Oh! my Jaqueline!" cried I, falling on my knees at her feet, and paſſionately ſeizing her hand, " Oh Jaqueline, is it " thus we meet!"

" Oh Seymor, do you ſtill retain your " ill-fated paſſion!—Is Jaqueline ſtill re-

" membered

" membered—ſtill beloved! But where-
" fore do you purſue me! Why would
" you interrupt the compoſure of my ſoul!
" Leave me—cried ſhe, fly forever from
" my ſight! Even this interview unſought
" as it was, is a breach of my duty."

" In vain I endeavoured to detain her
" —ſhe burſt into tears and tore herſelf
" from me.—I flung myſelf on the ground
" and beat my breaſt in the wildneſs of
" my deſpair. I was rouſed from my
" emotions by a confuſion I obſerved
" amidſt the company. The dancing was
" diſcontinued, and the muſic ceaſed. I
" perceived a croud aſſembled about ſome
" perſon whom I could not diſcern. A
" thouſand conjectures ruſhed on my ima-
" gination, and I was on the point of
" leaving my retreat; when I ſaw Madam
" de la Valiere advancing haſtily towards
" me. She flew to me and tenderly em-
" bracing me—

" Fly, Seymor, ſaid ſhe, Jaqueline con-
" jures you to leave this place immediately.

" Evince

" Evince your reſpect by your obedience " to her commands."

" I go, replied I, her mandates are ſa- " cred!—But though forced to relinquiſh " her love, let me ſtill poſſeſs her friend- " ſhip!"

" Receive this pledge of it," ſhe cried, taking a bracelet from her arm—" the " wealth of the Indies would have ap- " peared droſs in compariſon to the gift— " it was Jaqueline's picture! I caught it " to my heart, and preſſing the hand that " preſented it to my lips, I left Madam de " la Valiere, who was evidently impatient " of my preſence, and returned to the " place where I had left my horſes, exult- " ing in my treaſure, and rejoicing in the " conſciouſneſs of being ſtill dear to Ja- " queline.

" I was ſurprized to find my Swiſs " alone, and arrayed in the livery of my " French ſervant. To account for this " transformation, he informed me that I " had no ſooner departed than Jeannot " obliged him to transfer my clothes to

" him,

" him, and was gone, as he believed, to the
" caſtle. This intelligence ſet me almoſt
" frantic; and I no longer doubted that
" he had been the cauſe of the diſturbance
" I had obſerved amongſt the dancers.

" My ſuſpicions were well grounded.—
" The fellow who was a humouriſt and
" choſe to partake in the adventure, on
" finding himſelf dreſſed in a rich riding
" ſuit, thought proper to aſſume the airs
" of a man of quality; and introducing
" himſelf to the company with unpa-
" ralleled aſſurance, aſked one of the la-
" dies to dance. He was a good mimic
" and might poſſibly have ſucceeded in
" his impoſition, had he not been unfor-
" tunately recollected by a Swiſs gentle-
" man, with whom I had been intimately
" acquainted at Rome, and now declared
" his knowledge of him to the Count.
" The circumſtance of his belonging to
" me ſtrangely alarmed him. Poor Jean-
" not was ſeized in the height of his ca-
" reer, confronted with his accuſer, and
" cloſely examined in reſpect to the mo-

" tives

" tives of his enterprize. Where falſe-
" hood would have been unavailing he ad-
" hered to truth. He confeſſed his fault,
" but denied any other deſign but that of
" amuſing himſelf with a frolic;—ſaid he
" had borrowed the ſuit he wore of his
" maſter, without his permiſſion or know-
" ledge; and entirely denied my having
" the ſmalleſt ſhare in the adventure. After
" being ducked, and receiving a ſound
" drubbing from the Count's domeſtics,
" he was ignominiouſly diſmiſſed. I mean-
" time waited for him two hours in the
" extremeſt ſuſpence and anxiety, and was
" obliged at laſt to return to the city diſ-
" guiſed as I was. Happily I got unno-
" ticed to my lodgings, and had time to
" dreſs before my brother's return.

" It was night before Monſieur Jeannot
" deemed it expedient to make his appear-
" ance, and were it not that the rueful
" ſpectacle he exhibited in ſome meaſure
" diſarmed my reſentment, I believe I
" ſhould have torn him piecemeal.

" Late

" Late in the evening I received a billet
" —the writing was Madam de la Valier's.

*The Billet.**

" The imprudence of your valet has ex-
" tremely alarmed the Count, who believes
" him to have been inſtigated by you
" through diſhonourable deſigns. If the
" peace and honour of Jaqueline are dear
" to you, leave Geneva immediately!
" When her heart had begun to reconcile
" itſelf to its fate, why would you by ob-
" truding yourſelf on her ſight—by con-
" vincing her that a paſſion which ſhe be-
" lieved long ſince extinct, ſtill exiſts in
" your boſom; why would you renew the
" conflicts of her ſoul! Oh Seymor! dear
" and amiable friend, leave the poor vic-
" tim of duty to enjoy the triumph ſhe has
" ſo dearly purchaſed, and interrupt not
" by your preſence the only ſatisfaction
" ſhe is now capable of enjoying.

* This billet and Jaqueline's letter have been tranſlated by the editor from the original French.

" I can

" I can receive no anſwer—your imme-
" diate departure will ſufficiently evince
" your friendſhip for Jaqueline, and your
" reſpect for her commands."

" Yes, my Jaqueline," cried I, " you
" ſhall be obeyed!—Your Seymor would
" fly to the utmoſt verge of the earth ra-
" ther than diſturb for an inſtant the ſe-
" renity of your mind!"

" I dared not to write.—Obedience was
" now the only proof of tenderneſs that I
" could give, or the Counteſs receive with
" honour.

" I felt an infinite ſatisfaction in the
" little ſacrifice I was about to make. I
" prepared for my departure with the ut-
" moſt alacrity, and left the city before
" day-break in the morning, accompanied
" by my brother, who kindly acquieſced
" in my precipitate departure.

" We arrived in England and were re-
" ceived with rapture by our parents; but

" our

" our tender and reſpectable father ſur-
" vived our return but a year. Lord
" and Lady Manſell continued their friend-
" ſhip to me—whilſt they lived—I divided
" my time between them and my mother
" and brother, but a violent contagious
" diſorder deprived me at once of both
" thoſe loved and valued friends. As my
" recital has been already too much in the
" dolorous ſtrain, I will not enlarge on
" the affliction this event occaſioned me.
" Their ſon, now only ſeventeen, was by
" this double loſs delivered over to the
" tuition of an old grandmother, who has
" made it the ſtudy of her uſeleſs exiſtence
" to ſpoil and deſtroy him;—and indeed,
" her efforts have been but too effectually
" exerted. Yet he poſſeſſes many virtues,
" and you can no longer be ſurprized at
" the intereſt I take in his fate.

" Since my departure from Leyden, I
" have conſtantly correſponded with de la
" Valiere. I write to him of his lovely
" ſiſter—I make a thouſand enquiries; but
" in his anſwers he entirely overlooks them

" and

" and ſpeaks of her in ſuch general terms,
" that I learn little more from his letters
" than that ſhe ſtill exiſts.

" Seven years have elapſed ſince my ad-
" venture at Geneva; yet convinced as I
" am that our ſeparation muſt be eternal,
" ſo ſtrong is the impreſſion I ſtill retain
" of my unhappy attachment, that though
" it no longer embitters the tranquility of
" my mind, or renders me gloomy and
" unſocial, I feel an utter diſinclination
" to the idea of connecting myſelf with
" any other woman, and your poor friend
" is on the verge of degenerating into that
" uſeleſs and unnatural animal—a whim-
" ſical old batchelor!"

Oh, Henrietta, what an amiable heart was here unfolded to my view!—Happy Jaqueline, how I envy thee the poſſeſſion " of an affection ſo tender and ſo generous. —Yet wert thou not obliged to relinquiſh it! to unite thy fate with that of a mon-

ſter—

ſter—for what a monſter could he be that could exact the inhuman ſacrifice!

Poor Seymor! "A ſimilarity of ſuffer-"ings conciliates affection." It was his own ſentiment and I ſtrongly experience the juſtice of it. His narrative has coſt me more tears in tranſcribing than it did in the relation.—But they were partly ſelfiſh—It ſo ſtrongly called to my mind the remembrance of my own afflictions.—Why was it not my fate to meet a breaſt like Seymor's; then, though doomed, like him, to cheriſh an unfortunate attachment, —my heart inſtead of reproaching me inceſſantly with an unworthy weakneſs, had exulted in the conſciouſneſs of an amiable tenderneſs.

I have been for ſometime paſt ſo buſily engaged with Seymor's narrative, that I could think or write on no other ſubject! I obtained his permiſſion to repeat it to you, and he permitted me to take copies of the letters of the Counteſs and her mother, which I did in his preſence; for he would not truſt the originals out of his ſight. He has

has given me a ſolemn promiſe to viſit me next ſummer, if we are both in being—and ſaid at parting, that he ſhould eſteem the fatigue of a voyage from England amply recompenſed, by the ſatisfaction he ſhould feel in embracing his beloved friend and confidante—and on my part, my dear Henrietta, I ſolemnly proteſt, that not the united applauſes and admiration of all the fops, beaux, coxcombs and *petit maitres* contained within the precincts of London, Paris and Dublin, could communicate to my mind ſo animating a ſentiment of pleaſure, as the eſteem and approbation of this worthy man!

Lady Harriot arrived here laſt Saturday. I was particularly pleaſed with her viſit, as I have for ſome time paſt perceived in Archer's manners an unuſual ſerioufneſs. Something, I am convinced, afflicts him, and I love him too ſincerely to be inſenſible to his diſtreſs. She will diſcover the ſource of it; for nothing can eſcape her penetration—I am ſo fatigued with writing, I muſt abruptly bid you adieu!—

June

June 15th.

I cannot retire to reſt without informing you, I have ſeen your beloved. He arrived this evening, accompanied by Lord Hermont. I ſhould now be certain of my conqueſt, if I were not the moſt modeſt of human beings!

Poor Archer! I am exceedingly alarmed on his account—notwithſtanding his efforts to conceal his dejection, it was this evening more than ever apparent.—Methinks Lady Harriot is ſtrangely inattentive to his viſible diſtreſs!—

Adieu once more.

It is now ten days ſince I began this voluminous packet.

DELIA BLOOMFIELD.

LETTER XLVI.

Lord Archer to *Lord Revell.*

June 8th.

I Acknowledge the juſtice of your accuſation; yet think not I confeſs a breach of friendſhip. It is true, I have deceived you, but I have alſo deceived myſelf. My paſſion for Louiſa, was the ſource of this error. Young and romantic—impetuous and ardent—I ſuddenly conceived an affection, irreſiſtible in its progreſs and violent in its effects. Gloomy and thoughtful in the abſence of the object that inſpired it, in her preſence embarraſſed and aukward, I trembled with emotion when I beheld her. She returned my paſſion, and my raptures were as extatic as my anxieties had been painful. A fatal neceſſity ſeparated us forever, and the violence of my affliction equalled the ardour of my fondneſs;

neſs; but the impreſſion had been tranſient, and it was effaced by time.

In France, though I frequently admired, I never loved; and I returned to Ireland with a ſtrong conviction that my breaſt was no longer ſuſceptible of that paſſion.

When I firſt beheld Delia, ſhe excited no ſentiments but ſuch as every man of ſenſibility muſt feel for an amiable woman. A more intimate connection revealed to my view a character fraught with every virtue, and adorned with every grace. Eſteem and admiration are the involuntary tribute exacted by ſuperior merit from even the worthleſs and unfeeling; could I ſuſpect my heart of wandering too far when to theſe it ſuperadded the attachment of a brother, and the tenderneſs of a friend!—Too happy, had theſe been its only deviations! but the gradations are imperceptible, and when the breaſt is undefended by a prior attachment, how ſlight is the barrier that ſeparates the lover from the friend! But accuſtomed to annex to the idea of love, thoſe violent emotions I had

once experienced, I ſuſpected not a revolution till it was too late to guard againſt it; and I attributed the reluctance with which I left the preſence of my enchantreſs, and the joy with which I returned to it, to the gentle charm that reſults from female friendſhip—but this billet, which I yeſterday received from Wentworth, has at once diſſipated the illuſion and rendered me wretched!

To Lord Archer.

"Buſineſs prevents my return to the "country this week, but the impatience "of Lord Hermont will not admit of this "delay. I believe you have remarked "his partiality to our amiable friend.— "He imagines, how juſtly I know not, "that your ſentiments are ſimilar to his. "He conjures you to treat him with the "candour of a friend;—he diſdains to "uſurp the rights of another—if his con-"jectures are well grounded, he will re-"linquiſh all pretenſions, whatever the "ſacrifice may coſt him."

The

The ſhock I received from this letter was ſudden and violent, as the effects of electricity. Delia, to whom I had been reading, perceived my emotion with ſurprize and terror. I had ſufficient preſence of mind to aſſure her, that I was only ſeized with a violent vertigo; and retired to my apartment.

It was long ere I could aſſume compoſure ſufficient to enable me to return this anſwer to Wentworth's billet.

To the Rev. Mr. Wentworth.

DEAR WENTWORTH.

"I requeſt you will make my acknow-
"ledgements to Lord Hermont for his
"generous, though unneceſſary attention
"to my happineſs. Had I even, as he
"ſuppoſes, raiſed my views to Miſs
"Bloomfield (a preſumption I never even
"in thought was guilty of) I could not
"conſiſtently with honour and juſtice,
"pretend to limit her choice. I wiſh her
"happineſs with the tender anxiety of a

" brother, and no means appear more " likely to promote and enſure it than an " alliance with a nobleman ſo worthy and " accompliſhed, as your friend."

I am fully ſenſible of the delicacy of Lord Hermont's procedure. Superior to me in conſequence and fortune, he generouſly declined availing himſelf of advantages, which he might juſtly expect would give great weight to his pretenſions. I wiſh to be grateful, and yet feel an inſurmountable repugnance to the idea of being obliged to the man, whom I regard as my rival.—I cannot ſtay to witneſs his triumph! The inſtant that Delia receives him as a lover, that inſtant will I fly from Bloomfield—from Ireland!

The preparations for my voyage will ſhortly be made, very ſoon deſerted and alone, will I abandon my friends and country, perhaps forever!

I have

I have written my ſentiments without reſerve,—I no longer dread your raillery—you are light—but not unfeeling.

ARCHER.

LETTER XLVII.

The Anſwer.

Paris, June 29th.

NO, my dear friend, I am not of the ſtoical tribe, who pretend, that fire will not burn, and that pain is no evil.—What it may be in the moral ſenſe, I will not preſume to determine;—but in the phyſical one, pain is pain, and ſuch it muſt continue to the end of time; unleſs the college of phyſicians contrive ſome ingenious method of altering the preſent ſtructure of our bodies, or the Doctors of the

Sorbonne, excogitate ſome precious noſtrum to render our minds invulnerable; for the old faſhioned device of ſtoiciſm is now worn ſo threadbare, that inſtead of defending the few who endeavoured to aſſume it, from the ſhafts of misfortune, it diſcovers through its rents and tatters the feſtered wounds of their corroded boſoms!

You ſay I am light, but not unfeeling. Judge how juſt is your deciſion, from the reſolution I am on the point of commuicating. I applaud your determination. In vain we ſtrive to untie the bonds of love, like the Gordian knot they muſt be burſt by one glorious effort. Whatever falſe lights ſome modern caſuiſts may throw on the matter, not to endeavour to ſubdue your paſſion for Delia, will be criminal from the moment ſhe gives her hand to another.

You ſhall go then, my friend; and though you cannot expect to reap the peaceful olive in the fields of glory, the victorious laurel ſhall ſupply its place.—You ſhall go—but not "alone and deſerted"—

for

for I will be the companion of your voyage —will ſhare every fatigue and endeavour to mitigate every uneaſineſs.

What obligations do I owe to your friendſhip! No other motive could inſpire me with fortitude to break the ſeductive charm that has ſo long enſlaved me.

As ſoon as I have arranged my affairs, I will join you in London.—Farewell!—my heart exults in the proſpect of a reunion with its deareſt—its only friend.

REVELL.

LETTER XLVIII.

Lady Harriet Bloomfield to *Lady Wharton.*

June 10th,
Merrion-ſquare.

MR. BLOOMFIELD, has this day received propoſals from Lord Hermont, who, I told you, appeared ſo greatly

captivated with Delia, during her viſit to us. They are, as you may imagine, highly acceptable to him, nor does he apprehend any objection from his daughter, to whom he has referred his Lordſhip for an anſwer. But I, who am acquainted with her heart, am of a very different opinion, and have no apprehenſions, except from the complying ſweetneſs of her temper, which may induce her to yield too eaſily to the remonſtrances and interceſſions of her friends.

Though I received this intelligence with apparent ſatisfaction, you may readily conceive it was by no means agreeable to me. I was a good deal embarraſſed how to act, when Mr. Bloomfield, in a great meaſure relieved me from my perplexity, by entreating me to go to Bloomfield to conſult on the affair with Sir Richard and the old ladies, without whoſe concurrence nothing material could be reſolved on. This was what I moſt ardently deſired; but though I knew my preſence there might be extremely neceſſary, I was cautious of appearing to take too deep an *intereſt in the affair.*

fair. After *ſome pretended reluctance* to the journey, I ſuffered myſelf to be prevailed on by Mr. Bloomfield's inſtances, whom I greatly obliged by my compliance. Fortunately he has conceived ſo great an opinion of my ſagacity, that he thinks no ſcheme can be conducted with propriety, of which I had not the direction.

As the fate of my ſon haſtens to its criſis, my terrors and anxieties encreaſe! When—oh when ſhall I throw from my boſom this oppreſſive weight! I have "embarked "upon a ſea of troubles" and greatly do I doubt if I ſhall ever reach the port of peace!

Wentworth has juſt now left me. He told me, he and Lord Hermont are to ſpend next week at Firdale. Fortunately I ſhall be at Bloomfield before them, which will give me an opportunity of commencing my operationss before their arrival.

I leave town to-morrow morning, and Mr. Bloomfield is to follow me in a few days.

HARRIOT BLOOMFIELD.

LETTER XLIX.

Delia Bloomfield to *Henrietta Willmore.*

Tueſday evening,
June 16th.

SO—Lord Hermont has verified my prognoſtics and declared himſelf your Delia's lover!—Here has been a deep-laid plot—Wentworth, you and all, I ſuppoſe, engaged in the grand conſpiracy. But thank heaven! your vile machinations have had no effect.—Go forge your matrimonial fetters for ſome other culprit.—"I'll none of them!"

Lord

Lord Hermont is amiable and deſerves a better mate—one who with her hand can confer on him a heart;—but if I ever renounce a liberty ſo dear to me, I muſt have more powerful inducements than at preſent. For though I am far from ſuſpecting his Lordſhip of intereſted views, if he had ſeen your Delia unadorned by the gifts of fortune, it is more than probable, ſhe had never been the object of his wiſhes. Numbers of women, infinitely my ſuperiors in external advantages, are ſuffered to remain in quiet poſſeſſion of their liberty, if deſtitute of this droſs "*which buys the ſex a* "*tyrant o'er itſelf!*"

But the favorites of Plutus are always admired by the gentlemen; and the golden elixir they poſſeſs, may boaſt more potent powers than thoſe magic ſprings, which in the ages of chivalry were held in ſuch high eſtimation. So conſcious am I of the advantages I ſhall derive from this grand reſtorative, that I expect to preſerve the graces of ſpring amidſt the froſts of winter, and to hear myſelf complimented on my lillies

lillies and roſes at fourſcore, if I have the grace to continue in my virgin ſtate, to that period of life.

Lord Hermont's declaration was reſpectful and tender, but not half ſo entertaining as Manſell's. I have neither time nor inclination to repeat the particulars. I have written ſo much of late, that I am weary of the employment, and am tempted to give my poor pen a fortnight's reſpite.

I declined the intended honour as politely as I knew how, yet had the mortification to obſerve, that he was extremely affected.

Lady Harriot has aſſumed a higher tone on the occaſion than ſhe has ever yet done. She acts as my father's repreſentative—but his delegated power is exerted to little effect.—I have this inſtant eſcaped from a perſecution. I wiſh ſhe would turn her attention to her ſon, and not give herſelf ſo much needleſs uneaſineſs on my account —her unconcern at his viſible diſtreſs is aſtoniſhing!—She tells me, my friends expect me to marry.—Is then my peace to be

facri-

ſacrificed to the cynical vanity—the unworthy ambition of preſerving the family poſſeſſions in a right line!—No—let them deſcend to Bloomfield, or his heirs! I am too conſcious of their inſignificance to feel any ſolicitude concerning the perſon to whom they may devolve.—But my venerable friends are ſuperior to this weakneſs. They, only attentive to the happineſs of their child, ſuch is the delicacy of their affection, will never, even endeavour to bias her inclinations: and my higheſt ambition is to conſecrate my hours to their felicity:—to ſooth the ſorrow of declining life, by my tenderneſs, and animate its gloom by my chearfulneſs!

DELIA BLOOMFIELD.

LET-

LETTER L.

Lady Harriot Bloomfield to *Lady Wharton.*

Bloomfield, Tueſday.

I ARRIVED here on Saturday evening, and found Sir Richard, Lady Bloomfield, and Mrs. Bloomfield, at home, my ſon and Delia were out .. riding. I was pleaſed with their abſence, which gave me an opportunity of unfolding my embaſſy. As they have been all greatly prepoſſeſſed in Lord Hermont's favour, by his amiable character, they received my intelligence with great ſatisfaction.

Mrs. Bloomfield ſaid, "ſhe was ſure, "Delia would make no objections, for "that ſhe always mentioned his Lordſhip "with particular approbation."

I replied, "that I remarked ſhe had re-"ceived his aſſiduities when in town, with "great

" great complacency—and yet," continued I, " I know not, if it will not be the moſt " politic meaſure, to keep her ignorant of " his application to her father, and allow " him to plead his own cauſe. Being in- " troduced to a profeſſed lover, is apt to " diffuſe a diſagreeable reſtraint over the " carriage of a woman, and often prevents " a man from receiving thoſe opportuni- " ties of rendering himſelf pleaſing, which " a more unembarraſſed converſation would " naturally allow. Beſides, as Delia is " extremely romantic, I doubt if his pre- " vious addreſs to Mr. Bloomfield, will " not be conſtrued into a heinous breach " of delicacy."

They readily acquieſced in this reaſoning, which was undoubtedly plauſible, and agreed to keep the affair a profound ſecret from Delia. This was a principal point gained—for if left to her own determination, I never doubted her rejection of Lord Hermont.

They returned ſoon after. Delia met me with her uſual gaiety and affection, but the

the brow of my ſon was clouded with ſolemnity. He loves her, Maria, with the tendereſt paſſion, and I ſuſpect that he has by ſome means received a hint of Lord Hermont's propoſals.

On Monday evening as we ſat at tea, Lord Hermont and Wentworth, were announced. I looked firſt at Delia, whoſe animated countenance expreſſed ſurprize and pleaſure. But when I turned to my ſon, good Heaven! what were my feelings! I read in his countenance the gloom of deſpair and the tortures of jealouſy. Yet he endeavoured to conceal his agitation; with every one elſe he ſucceeded, but the vigilance of maternal tenderneſs was not to be eluded. When I beheld his noble ſpirit ſtruggling in the toils in which my own artifices had enſnared him;—when I regarded him as the victim of a hopeleſs paſſion, for in that inſtant when fear predominated in my mind, I dreaded leſt Delia ſhould diſappoint my expectations, and accept Lord Hermont, my diſtreſs was, if poſſible, more poignant than his own.

His

His rival meantime, enraptured with his reception from Delia, whom he doubtleſs thought acquainted with his application to her father, appeared intoxicated with pleaſure, and was too much occupied by his own felicity, to attend to any thing but Delia. Wentworth was more diſengaged, and ſeemed, I thought, to notice Archer's emotion; Delia too, appeared diſtreſſed at his chagrin, and ſeemed ſolicitous to divert it. The evening was wet, which confined us to the houſe. She played and ſung—my ſon threw himſelf into a chair at a diſtance from the company—but his ſighs!—Oh Maria, they penetrated to my heart!

Our viſitors ſtaid to ſupper.—The evening was one of the moſt tedious and painful I had ever experienced; when they at length aroſe to go, Archer attended them to the door, and we ſaw him no more; though it had been always our cuſtom to ſit chatting an hour in the parlour after Sir Richard and Lady Bloomfield were retired.

tired. I went up immediately, and Delia followed me into my dreſſing-room.

"Dear Madam," cried ſhe, "what "diſtreſſes my brother?"

"Why, my dear," replied I, "I knew "not that he was diſtreſſed."

"Is it poſſible you have not perceived "how greatly he is altered? You, who "are ſo penetrating. His ſpirits were re-"markably good until he received a letter "one evening laſt week, ſince which he "has appeared gloomy and deſponding."

I replied ſlightly, that I ſhould endeavour to diſcover his uneaſineſs, if he had any; and as I did not wiſh for any particular converſation at that time, I complained of drowſineſs—ſhe took the hint and left me.

Early this morning we received an invitation to dine with Dean Sedly—as no one objected to the party, Lady Bloomfield ſent an anſwer that we would wait on him. Archer rode out immediately after breakfaſt. He returned about one, and had his hair dreſſed, which led me to conclude he intended

intended accompanying us; but at three, when we were ready to go, he ſent his ſervant to apologize for his not being able to attend us, on account of ſome letters which required immediate anſwers. Delia appeared extremely chagrined at this meſſage, and entreated me to go and prevail on him to come with us. I found him ſitting in a melancholy and thoughtful attitude. I told him Delia had ſent me to ſolicit his company; his countenance brightened at her name—but he again excuſed himſelf; and I own his refuſal did not diſpleaſe me.

I returned to Delia and told her he had buſineſs, which could not be deferred; though I am perſuaded his important letters were entirely the coinage of his own brain. As we were getting into the carriage, I ſaw him at one of the front windows, but he drew back as I looked up.

Delia met Lord Hermont with the ſame unconſtrained good humour, and he appeared as much enraptured with his fancied happineſs, as he had been the preceding evening.

Our

Our dinner, to every one but me, was ſprightly and ſocial. When it was over, we left the old gentlemen to diſcuſs the affairs of the nation—and went into the garden; but as there was a great ſharpneſs in the air, the old ladies returned to the houſe, and we ſtruck into the ſhrubbery. Lord Hermont and Delia walked on before us. Wentworth purpoſely detained me at ſome diſtance from them, and though Delia called to us to join them, in a ſhort time took care to loſe them entirely. We walked until ſummoned by the bell for tea, and got to the houſe before them. Delia firſt entered and looked grave and thoughtful; but it was in Lord Hermont's countenance that I expected to read the doom of my ſon. With what perturbation did I wait his approach!—my heart palpitated with mingled ſenſations of painful anxiety and pleaſing expectation. He came, and my apprehenſions were diſſipated in an inſtant—the firſt glance convinced me he had been rejected.

Every

Every one perceived the alteration—their gloom ſeemed to diffuſe itſelf over every countenance. I, who had been before the graveſt of the company, was on a ſudden become the moſt lively and chearful; but I repreſſed my gaiety; for though conſcious the pains I take to eſcape ſuſpicion, are unneceſſary, I am ever on the watch to avoid it, as if under the immediate and painful inſpection of ſome penetrating eye. This is a curſe annexed to the practice of deceit, and thoſe ingenuous natures who are unacquainted with hypocriſy, can form no conception of its bitterneſs.

After tea I heard Delia in a low voice, urging Lady Bloomfield to return. The carriage was ordered, and the Dean, who, I believe was at no loſs to account for the alteration in the temper of his gueſts, uſed no perſuaſions to detain us.

Archer, at our return, looked from one to the other—and examined Delia with looks of the moſt penetrating curioſity.

Lady

Lady Bloomfield, her ſiſter and I, retired to her ladyſhip's dreſſing room.

"I think," ſaid I, "our plan does not "ſeem to promiſe us the ſucceſs we ex- "pected."

"Perhaps," ſaid Lady Bloomfield, "'tis "only ſome little jealouſy—things of this "nature will intervene amongſt lovers."

"I proteſt," cried Mrs. Bloomfield, "I think a ſettled melancholy is viſible in "the poor child's air and countenance. I "would not for worlds ſee her made un- "happy—it would break my heart."

"None of her friends," replied I, "wiſh to make her *unhappy*. But girls of "her age are not always the moſt com- "petent judges of the meaſures moſt con- "ducive to their real advantage—and "Lord Hermont is not a perſon to be "lightly rejected."

HARRIOT BLOOMFIELD.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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